

THE QUEEN
EDMONTON



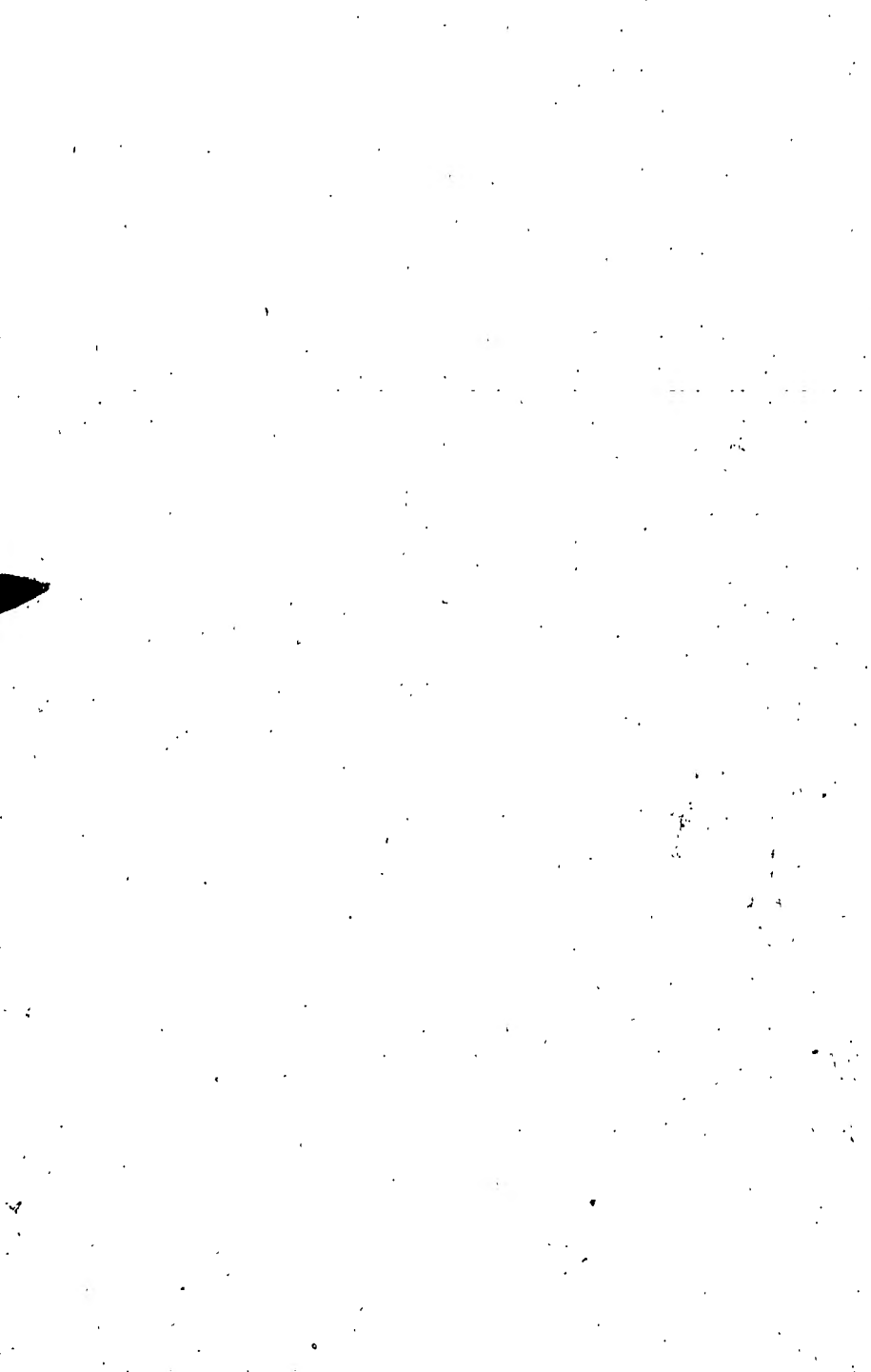
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To Aunt Ada

With much love

From the Author.



McQUEEN OF EDMONTON



DR. McQUEEN'S LAST PHOTOGRAPH

McQUEEN of EDMONTON

By
E. A. CORBETT, M.A.



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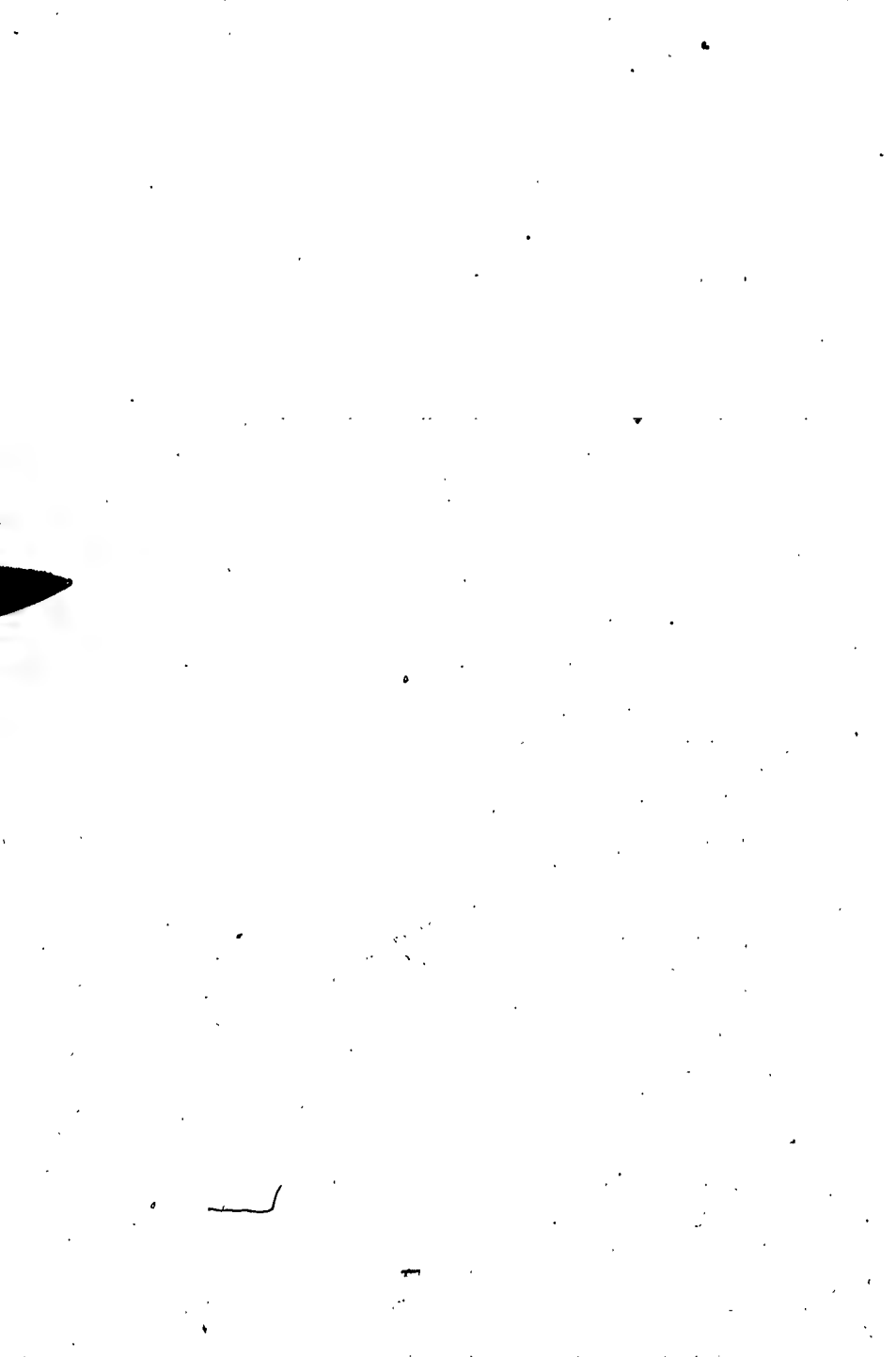
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INTRODUCTION

CHURCH AND HOME

A SURVEY of the Presbyterian Church in Canada during the last quarter of the nineteenth century reveals a striking resemblance in the capacity and character of the men occupying its strategic centres. They were men of rugged physique, sound academic training, and quite remarkable administrative ability. It has been said that the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church was the most democratic and best-managed parliament in Canada. With a few exceptions, they were not great preachers in the sense in which that term is commonly used, but they were clothed with an authority and power common to Scots Presbyterian ministers all over the world at that time.

There was nothing accidental or passing about the position of the Presbyterian minister in a Canadian community. By history and tradition, by training and by the laying on of hands, he had come to his

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kingdom, and that man must be well versed in church history who dared to question the apostolic origin of the Assembly, Synod, Presbytery, or Kirk Session.

One thing most of these men possessed in common—they came from Canadian pioneer stock, and were as wholesome, genuine and vigorous as the good soil on which they had been reared.

The home of a Presbyterian family in good standing in the Church in those days was often regulated by a rigid puritanism difficult for the young and independent in spirit; but there was a rugged discipline about the place that left an indelible impression on all its members. In many homes there was family worship twice a day, grace before meals, attendance at a Wednesday night prayer-meeting and a Tuesday meeting of a Christian Endeavour Society, two services on Sunday and a Sunday school, to say nothing of the memorizing of long chapters of the Scriptures and a thorough mastery of the Shorter Catechism. What good Presbyterian youngster of the nineties does not recall the long hours spent in cramming the Psalms of David and toiling through a winter which began with "What is the chief end of man?" and



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ended at Easter with "What does the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer teach us?"

He will remember, too, the stuffy little boy in a blue Sunday suit, who stood uncomfortably before the minister to receive a prize for having breathlessly recited the whole Catechism (very often without understanding a word of it).

The Sabbath in the nineties was strictly observed. No wheel on the farm turned except on its way to the kirk. It was a day in which no light reading of any kind was allowed. Shoes were blackened and wood-boxes filled on Saturday night; and even the heavy Sunday dinner, which helped more than anything else to realize the desired atmosphere of solemn stillness, was, as far as possible, prepared on Saturday. No whistling was allowed, not even of the hymns, and I can well remember the stern disapproval of my father when the Sunday-school superintendent took his new bicycle out for a spin on Sunday afternoon. That was the day when the front parlour was thrown open, and the guests, who had come for the noon dinner, retired there to sit beneath the shadow of whiskered ancestors, who frowned down upon them from gilt frames arranged like a jury along

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the wall. The sackcloth and ashes of a mediæval monk was surely no more uncomfortable than the position of a young boy dressed in his Sunday clothes, and condemned to sit through a whole afternoon on a horsehair sofa in such an atmosphere.

In my own mind, the "great and terrible day of the Lord" was always associated with the memory of a Sunday afternoon in Elder Ramsey's sitting-room. However we may regard such experiences, they undoubtedly had their part in the discipline of life, and it was from just such an environment that men like the Annands, the Mowatts, the Geddes, the McGillivrays, the McQueens, and the James Robertsons went forth to their destiny, fortified to sustain whatever "slings and arrows" fortune might hold for them.

Every family of sons had at least one "lad o' pairts," and from long, whispered conferences at night the plans emerged which provided for his education. In Nova Scotia many a lad went out from such a home on his way to Dalhousie and Pine Hill with little more than a bag of oatmeal and a barrel of herring, and by the grace of God and a good stomach lived to graduate and adorn the pulpit of the Presbyterian

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Church. I have heard the late Dr. Ephraim Scott and my father tell of Dalhousie and Pine Hill College in the seventies, and I know that many of the great men of the Church of that day had come through such a training in plain living and high thinking and remained faithful to their vows, the Shorter Catechism and oatmeal porridge, through a long and useful life.

In those days sermons were long and meticulous expositions of the Scriptures, and were bearable to the young and restless only by grace of long discipline and an ample supply of peppermint lozenges. In one of my father's churches in Prince Edward Island no organ was allowed, and the paraphrases were sung with a solemn dignity that one can never forget. As the congregation, swaying to the movement of the precentor's arm, rose to the tune of "Old Hundred" or the minor themes of the paraphrases, something entered into a small boy's heart to remain there for ever.

Communion was celebrated only once or twice a year. Small copper tokens were given out in advance by the Elders to those members who were considered to be in good standing. The day was approached with solemn veneration, and after the

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great communion hymn, "Twas on that night when doomed to know the eager rage of every foe," the minister "fenced" the tables with the reading of that awful warning to sinners, "If any man eat and drink unworthily, he doth eat and drink damnation to his own soul." Only by fasting and prayer could an honest man fit himself to face calmly such an injunction, and "go forward" to eat and drink those precious symbols of the broken body and the spilled blood of Christ.

The minister's prayers and his sermon were replete with strong, full-blooded words, each one of which carried an immeasurable significance and reality for the congregation of that day and generation. Such words and phrases as "sanctification," "purification," "justification," "redemption," "the blood of the Lamb"; "the unpardonable sin," "calling and election," "faith and works"; "garments made white"; "weeping and wailing"; "foreordination," "predestination"; "the lost," "the redeemed," have to a great extent passed from the vocabulary of the modern minister. But forty years ago they were as much a part of the atmosphere of the Sabbath as the over-

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heated mustiness of the church in winter, and the drone of flies that harboured in the window-blinds in summer.

To join the Church at that time was an ordeal very few people dared to contemplate until the "light from within" made it quite clear that God had spoken, and that a profession of faith was a duty not to be lightly considered.

In a general way, the young candidate for the ministry of the Presbyterian Church in Canada in the last half of the nineteenth century emerged from a home in which life was directed and character shaped by just such conditions and environment. Schools were distant, churches far apart, and community life unorganized except through the Church and political affiliations. Education was difficult to obtain and was appreciated all the more for that reason. Home life, although simple and lacking in those luxuries which now seem essential, was nevertheless rich in contentment and family loyalty.

David George McQueen, the story of whose life forms the subject of the succeeding chapters in this book, grew to manhood in such a home.

CHAPTER I

THE McQUEEN TRADITION

FROM the days of the Highland Clearances. Act the case for emigration became yearly more apparent in the Scottish Highlands. Sheep-farming was taking the place of agriculture; the clansman was not fitted for the industrial life of the lowlands or of England. Migration was an increasing necessity. During the opening years of the nineteenth century thousands of the thriftiest crofters in the Highlands went to the United States. Selkirk's unselfish efforts gave the tide of migration new direction. The settlement on Prince Edward Island, in 1803, of eight hundred people from Argyle, Ross-shire, Inverness, and the Isle of Skye, definitely turned the thought of prospective settlers to Canada, and with the establishment of the Selkirk colony at Red River the movement of rural folk from the Highlands of Scotland never really ceased until Canada had its fair share of this splendid stock, from Halifax to Vancouver.

In the wake of the exodus which took place in 1832, James McQueen and his bride came to Canada. He was from the

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parish of Crawford, in Lanarkshire, and his young wife, Catherine Goldie Hewitson, was from Galloway. Both were well fitted for the difficult task of clearing the forest and breaking the land for a new home. James McQueen, although descended from lawyers and lairds, and endowed with the keen mind and sound judgment of an inherited culture, was at heart a man of the soil, although his sons declare he was not of rugged constitution, nor skilful with his hands. His wife, on the other hand, was a farmer's daughter, and had grown up accustomed to, and proficient in, all the native handicrafts of spinning, weaving, knitting, and the countless household and field duties of a small farm in the Lowlands. They were married on Christmas Day, 1832, and in the following April set sail from Greenock for Canada. After a tedious voyage of ten weeks, they reached Quebec, and continued their journey westward by means of such primitive conveyances as Durham boats and two-wheeled carts until they reached "Little York," known to many as "Muddy York," now the city of Toronto. Here the young wife remained while her husband started out to search for a site for their new home. After

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walking as far west as London, Ontario, James McQueen finally selected Lot 19 on the seventh concession of Beverly township, and on that spot the McQueen home was built which is still in possession of the family, and serves as a rallying point for all the far-flung descendants of this sturdy pioneer.

The homestead selected was about eight miles from the town of Galt, and after he was joined by his wife, James McQueen at once proceeded to hew a clearing from the living forest of oak, walnut, beech and maple that cumbered the soil. Clearing land in Ontario has always been a much more difficult undertaking than clearing land on the western prairies. Even in the heavily-wooded areas of Alberta, trees can be cut down and roots grubbed out at the rate of thirty to fifty acres a season. But in Ontario the great hardwood trees, with century-old roots gripping the land, stood like an army of giants to defy the haste of man.

With infinite labour and patience the first acres were laid bare in the depths of the forest, and a log house and barn erected. Many people living to-day remember well the amazing skill of the old-time axeman.

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With no other tools than a chalk-line and a razor-sharp broad-axe, he could "face" the huge timbers almost as straight and smooth as sawn lumber. Neighbours helped to "raise" the buildings, and the proof of their skill may still be seen on many an eastern farm where the first house, built one hundred years ago and still standing the test of time and weather, is now used for a tool-shed or granary.

Slowly through the years the McQueen estate took shape; acre was added to acre; stumps were cleared, stones picked and piled; fences were built. At a banquet some years ago I heard Dr. McQueen tell of those fences. They were built, he said, of white oak, and some of them of walnut; and years afterward, when good cured hardwood was required to make a new whipple-tree or cross-bar, a rail from a fifty-year-old fence supplied the need.

As the family increased, a new house of logs was built to take the place of the original "shanty." Three children—Jean, Robert and Thomas—were born in the first house, and seven—James, Agnes, John, William, Catherine, Julia and David George—in the second. The present residence of the family, a large stone house, was built

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in 1859, and in this comfortable and commodious dwelling the subject of this biography grew to manhood.

Life in a rural community in the fifties and sixties of the last century was much alike in every part of Eastern Canada. Conditions were primitive; roads were unspeakably bad, implements crude, money scarce and difficult to obtain. On the other hand, people lived simply, and, in the main, healthily; and a fairly successful farmer added year by year to a steadily-growing bank account, however small it might be. Food was home-grown; meat, fruit and vegetables were supplied in abundance; sugar was made from the sap of the maple tree; wheat and oats, crushed at a local mill or at home, supplied flour for bread and oatmeal for porridge. Butter and cheese were home-made, and any groceries that were purchased were paid for in butter and eggs. The making of soap and candles, the business of carding and spinning, were as much a part of a good housewife's equipment as making butter or "putting up preserves." Tobacco-users grew their own poison and cured it in the rafters of the stable, whence it found its way to the bowl of a home-made pipe with a flavour

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and potency unlike anything else in the world.

Community spirit was spontaneous and friendly. All difficult work was carried out by the arrangement of "bees," when, with the aid of a plentiful supply of sound whiskey, locally brewed, barns were raised, a sick man's crop harvested, or a winter's supply of wood for a needy widow piled high to the eaves of her house.

In many districts boots were made by a travelling cobbler, who sat for weeks in the kitchen, and, to the delight of children, fashioned those marvellous copper-toed boots that a lad could grow out of but never wear down. A travelling tailor performed the same function in the matter of Sunday broadcloths at fifteen dollars a suit and "found." The schoolteacher was "boarded round" from house to house and received an immense salary, often as much as two hundred dollars a year.

When James McQueen settled at Kirkwall (as it was later called) in 1833, there were five families, consisting of some twenty-five persons, already on the land. These people had arrived in August, 1832, and had erected a large log shelter to accommodate themselves and their equip-

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ment until each family should succeed in erecting a shanty of its own, and then it was used as a temporary place of worship as soon as the services of a minister were secured. In the first little colony there were: Robert Riddle, John Frier, James Stewart, Robert Dickson and John Kier. The settlement more than doubled its population with the arrival of the McQueens and ten other families in 1833. With characteristic energy and foresight, this little band of settlers organized their first congregation for divine worship, determined to perpetuate in this new land the reverence for sacred things, and the sound moral principles, in which they had been reared.

Rev. Thomas Christie was the minister. Winter and summer, in wet weather and freezing cold, he plodded on foot into "Little Scotland" to minister to the eighteen adult members and their families who made up the first congregation. In 1835 a log church was built which was used as a place of worship until 1848, when the stone church, still in use, was constructed. When these pioneers of Western Ontario went to church they made a day of it.

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Roads were largely a matter of picking the least difficult pathway through the stumps. Minister and people alike came to church on foot, or occasionally with ox-teams, and one trip was made to do for all the church services. The Sunday school opened at nine o'clock and the services in the church at eleven o'clock. The service consisted of a lecture on some portion of Scripture, followed by a sermon. These, together with prayer and singing, lasted until two o'clock. Then came the Bible Class for another hour, altogether covering a period of six hours, the minister presiding for the full period.

That order of service continued for twenty years with scarcely any change, and in that sabbath-day tradition the McQueen family was schooled from infancy.

Rev. Mr. Porteous, who served the Kirkwall congregation from 1848 to 1875, was a man of great earnestness and an inspiring teacher. In addition to his responsibility as minister of a large parish, he was for twenty-three years Superintendent of Education for the district in which he laboured, and undoubtedly had much to do with directing the destinies of

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the young men and women of his flock. It may well be that this godly gentleman was responsible for the fact that Robert McQueen, the oldest son of the McQueen family, was teacher of the local school for thirty-two years, and clerk of the Kirkwall Session for sixty-four years. That quality of steadfastness and endurance characterized all of James McQueen's sons. There is a striking similarity between the life of Mr. Porteous and that of David McQueen, who was pastor of one congregation for forty-three years, and, for a part of the time, also an Inspector of Schools.

There was a plentiful supply of books in the McQueen home, for James McQueen had brought from Scotland a library which made his house for many years a centre of attraction to book-lovers of the community. A part of that library was a complete early edition of Addison's *Spectator*.

We may well picture the youngest member of the family, David George, poring over these volumes by candle-light, and laying the foundations of that sense of good English and well-based argument that characterized his utterances in later life. No doubt it was from the pages of this well-

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chosen collection of books that the members of the McQueen family, as well as many another of the neighbourhood, received the inspiration which led them to seek higher education in the schools and colleges of Ontario.

James McQueen himself possessed qualities of mind and disposition which were immediately recognized by the other settlers, and he quickly assumed a place of leadership in the community. He was for nine years a member of the Municipal Council of Beverly, during six of which he was reeve. A vigorous and eloquent exponent of popular rights, he took an aggressive part in the struggle for representative government, which occupied the minds of all responsible citizens throughout Canada at that time. In the home, and at public functions in the community, he maintained a quiet dignity that gave force and colour to his religious and political convictions and left an indelible impression upon his family and associates. A Conservative in religion but Liberal in politics, he concerned himself throughout a long life with the two great problems ever present in a growing community—adequate

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provision for the education of his children and those of his neighbours, in church and school, and the economic and political necessities of a rapidly developing country.

In July, 1933, a striking tribute was paid to the enduring quality of the McQueen tradition when some one hundred and fifty descendants of James McQueen and his wife gathered at Kirkwall on the old homestead to celebrate the one-hundredth anniversary of their arrival. A cairn, erected on the site of the original log house, carries the inscription: "James McQueen and his wife, Catherine Goldie McQueen, settled here in 1833. Erected 1933."

During the celebration James McQueen, a great-grandson, read some verses which worthily represent the spirit and purpose of the gathering:

We should walk reverently who walk abroad,
Upon the lands our forbears cleared of old—
.

We should with thankfulness behold the fields,
And fruitful orchards leaning to the sun,
And think of them, whose courage, strength and
faith,
These from the forest won.

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We should walk humbly, we who know the tale,
So truly told of those old pioneers,
Moved by the living words, at times to joy,
At times perchance to tears.

We should walk humbly, for our lesser selves:
But, oh, from east to west, from sea to sea,
In us there burns anew a fire of pride
That of the blood are we!

—*Ernest H. A. Home.*

CHAPTER II

SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

DAVID GEORGE McQUEEN knew the smell of a lantern-lit cow-stable and horse-barn at six o'clock on a winter's morning for many years before he knew the luxury of sleeping in or dressing in a warm room. He knew how to swing an axe and make a decent joint before he knew much about algebra or latin. And if he hauled cordwood to town at two dollars and fifty cents a cord, he had also cut, piled and measured it with all the joyous vigour and enthusiasm of a healthy lad who earns his first dollars in that way.

The local schoolhouse had been built upon land donated by James McQueen, and was situated on a corner of the McQueen farm. Here the family received its early education, and in that school Robert, the eldest of the McQueen boys, taught for thirty-two years. To the eldest brother the young lad turned for his first instruction, and to the end of Robert's days he was the kind counsellor and friend of the youngest son. Undoubtedly Robert McQueen recognized in his young brother, David, gifts of mind and heart that set him apart as

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worthy of a college education. The family had prospered, and it required little urging to prepare the way for the youngest son to attend high school at the neighbouring town of Waterdown. After graduating from that institution, he taught school for a time, and, when he was already twenty-six years of age, entered the Arts Faculty of the University of Toronto, from which he graduated four years later with honours in mathematics.

During his school and college days, David McQueen gave little thought to the question of entering the ministry. In fact, his natural bent for keen argument, and his practical turn of mind, rather indicated a capacity for law or business. But Robert McQueen, clerk of the Kirkwall Church Session, student of the Bible and Church history, steeped in that reverence for the position of the minister which characterized the good Presbyterian of his day, tactfully and prayerfully turned the young man's thoughts to the Church. Indeed, there was much in the Church of that time to attract and inspire able young men. Presbyterian ministers were a power in the land; they occupied positions of unquestioned authority in the community. While

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they were ill paid, for the most part, they nevertheless had comfortable homes with time for study and self-improvement. The message of the Church was clear-cut and untouched by any serious undercurrent of doubt regarding its cardinal doctrines.

Robert McQueen's prayers were answered when, in 1884, David McQueen entered Knox Theological College in Toronto as a candidate for the ministry of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Those who remember the tall, spare figure, and the fascinating smile of Dr. McQueen of Edmonton, will have no difficulty in recognizing the youth who strolled about the halls and classrooms of Knox College during the next three years, as he is described in Professor W. J. Loudon's recent book, *Studies of Student Life*.

E. P. has a roll of manuscript in one hand (I think they must be briefs), and he is holding in the other hand, as if it were a prize, a funny-looking object, fat and round, with curving neck and a label on top; surely it must be Scotch. There! he stops and reaches out the bottle to a man who stands upon the road and shakes his head. I wonder who that fellow is? I know the figure dressed in black, a gown that reaches almost to the ground; but his back is towards me and I cannot see his face. E. P.

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goes on his way, and the tall, dark figure turns his face to me and walks with bended head. Who is this I see? I look upon the figure once again, as it saunters slowly down the hill; surely it must be Dave McQueen. Yes, and now he stops to chat with another youngish-looking fellow who wears glasses. That's McGregor Young; I could write an entertaining book about him if I put down the honest truth, but I'll have to wait until he's dead, and meanwhile spend a little time on Dave although he's but a humble parson in the West.

He walks exactly as he used to walk along the college halls away back in 1884; erect and slow, with even tread; older, and his hair has turned from black to white; but his smile is just the same . . . Of a serene and even temperament, and an open, candid mind, he was, among his classmates, one to be trusted in every way. I remember him well, in the old physical laboratory; when quarrels would arise among the students he was the one to smooth things over and turn enemies into friends. He has been in Edmonton since his graduation in 1887, and has seen the city grow from a mere prairie settlement into a great business centre. As he stands and talks to many friends who crowd around him from the passing stream, let us open up the swinging door that leads us to the past, and push aside the veil of time, casting our eyes upon his winding trail. There may be others of his year who have placed a deeper mark on mother earth, or have reached a higher pinnacle of fame; a few perhaps who

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have become richer and more influential; but no one who has served his people or his country with greater zeal than Dave McQueen.

That he was never the long-faced theologian, so often caricatured in comic strips and on the stage, is, of course, obvious to all who knew his love of fun and his delightful sense of humour. The following letter, written by Dr. McQueen to Prof. Loudon, in 1927, still further illustrates his broad tolerance.

I have just read your account of the 1882 show in which E. P. took a prominent part. I was writing on the examination and did not witness the fun, but heard part of it. E. P. was writing on his fourth-year papers and was taking three honour departments, and happened to have that one period free. He had about twenty days of continuous examinations—two each day; but in spite of that, found time, in the one spare period he had, to have a little fun. I remember he used to go around with a cushion on which he had finally to sit to relieve his seat. You will remember the usual notice in the outer hall, that there was to be no loitering there while the examination was in progress. E. P. came up and stood in the outer hall, looking at this notice, when McKim, the Bedel, asked him if he did not see the notice. It was written by Baker, who was registrar at the time. E. P. peered at it through his glasses and said: "Not a bad notice, but damned poor

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writing." You know how that would affect McKim, who went into Convocation Hall and shut the door in E. P.'s face and stood with his back to the door and his hands close up to the keyhole, watching the candidates. You will recollect his attitude. Some one, likely E. P., spat through the keyhole on McKim's hands. I was sitting well up in the Hall and did not hear all the row that followed; but you can imagine what it was like. The last time I met E. P. was in a compartment of the C.P.R. coming from Vancouver. He was on his way to London on some Privy Council case. I was passing the door and he called to me to come in, saying: "As far as I can remember, you neither smoked nor drank, but come in and talk"; so I went in and spent a pleasant hour with him, while he enjoyed a bottle of Scotch.

That was Dr. McQueen as hundreds of men knew him; kindly, humorous and indulgent.

The three years in Knox College were years of fulfilment. The four years in Arts, with its eight sessions of hard drilling in the wide range of subjects that make up a degree course, was the best possible background for the more specific curricula of the professional schools, and McQueen took theology in a joyous stride. There was no doubt from the first year that he had found the thing he wanted to do. He

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loved the slow-moving but satisfactory progress made in the study of Hebrew, and delighted in the new light discovered in New Testament exegesis, Church History, Homiletics, the Philosophy of Religion, Systematic Theology, Church Law and Procedure. He was an eager and ready student, and he repeated in theology the success which had honoured his university work.

In 1887 McQueen graduated from Knox College, with an honourable record behind him, an education which provided him with tools well fitted to his hand, and a heart full of fervour and devotion to the cause to which he had from henceforth dedicated his life.

CHAPTER III

THE CALL OF THE WEST

THE history of the Christian Church in Western Canada is as colourful and heroic as the record of missionary achievement in any country. From the days when Jesuit priests accompanied the Verendryes on their hazardous journeys through the unknown West, to the present time, the advancing frontier has thrown back its inevitable challenge to the devotion and daring of ardent souls in Catholic and Protestant Church alike.

James Evans, and Robert Rundle, who came to Fort Edmonton in 1841, had served their day and left the country before David McQueen was born. In September, 1843, while Rundle was serving, as best he could, a field which reached from Beaver Lake to Rocky Mountain House, a tall, toil-worn ecclesiastic in a threadbare cassock knocked at the door of the great Grey Nuns' home in Montreal. His face was bronzed and lined from twenty years' exposure to the winds and sun and the killing cold of the north-western plains. For twenty years Bishop Provencher of

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Red River had sought in vain for help in the work of his vast diocese. Now he was determined to try once again to find motherly hands to feed his flock. Some one had said, "Try the Grey Nuns; they never refuse," but his hand trembled on the knocker as he thought of the sacrifice he was about to ask them to make.

To the assembled audience of thirty-eight nuns Monseigneur Provencher spoke: "When leaving the Red River I said, 'O my God, you know my need of the help of nuns. Vouchsafe to lead my steps into some place where I can find them.' Then I set out in confidence that my prayers would be answered. Would any of you be willing to come to the West?" There was a moment of silence; then every woman there rose and volunteered to go, and the story of the work of the Grey Nuns of the North is one of the noblest stories in the history of Canada.

Twenty years later, Bishop Anderson, of the Anglican diocese of Rupert's Land, stood before an audience of church people in London and read a letter from Rev. Robert MacDonald, one of his missionaries to the Loucheux Indians of the Mackenzie River district. MacDonald had written to say

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quite simply that he was dying and asked that some one be sent to take over the work he must soon relinquish. After reading the letter, Bishop Anderson said: "Will no one come forward to take up the standard of the Lord and occupy the ground?" After the service a young man by the name of Bompas strode into the vestry and offered himself for the post, and for the next forty years the name of William Carpenter Bompas was a sweet savour unto God in all the vast lone land from Aklavik to the Yukon, and from Fort Norman to the headwaters of the Peace.

It will not be possible within the limits of this chapter to tell of Father Lacombe, the MacDougalls, and all those other heroic souls who make up the honour roll of Western missions. Enough has perhaps been said to show that when David McQueen came to Alberta, he followed in the wake of a group of men and women of various denominations whose lives form an inspiring part of the history of the Christian Church in Canada. It was the "Great Superintendent" Robertson who laid his quick, nervous hands on young McQueen's shoulders and claimed him for the West.

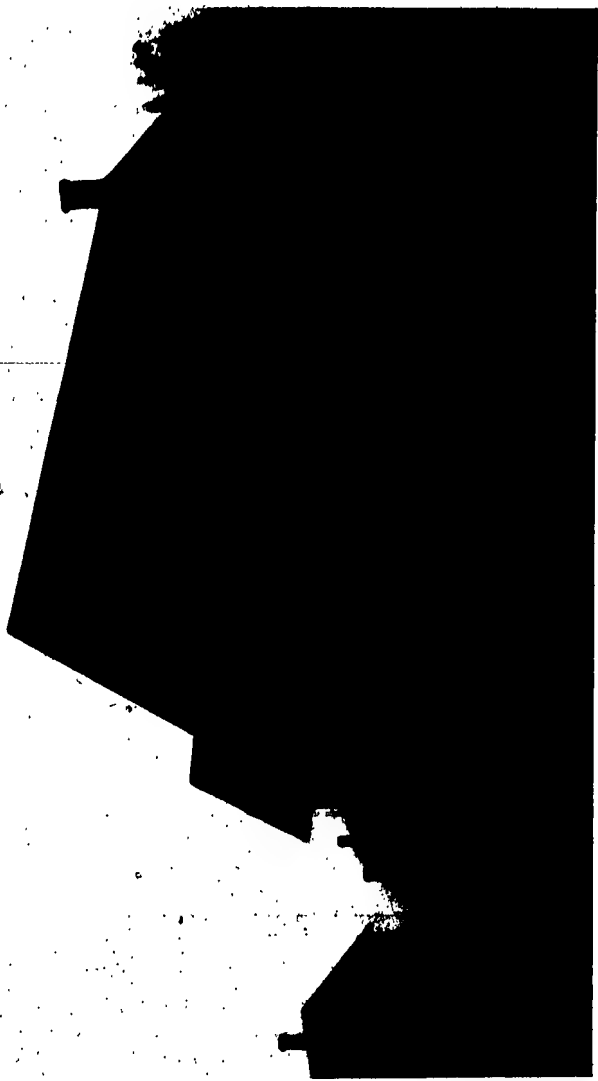
Robertson was born in the valley of the

McQueen of Edmonton

Tay, Scotland, in 1839, and came to Canada with his parents when he was sixteen years of age. He graduated from the University of Toronto, and attended both Princeton and Union theological seminaries; and, after pastorates in Ontario and Winnipeg, became Superintendent of Missions for the West in 1881. He was of the breed made famous by the saddle-bag preachers of Ontario of whom Duncan Campbell Scott has written:

They set up their altars wherever a willing human heart could be found beneath the primeval maples, between the fire-blackened stumps of the new clearing, or under the rude scoop-roof of the first log shanty. They travelled about sometimes on horseback, sometimes on foot, roughly garbed, their knapsacks filled with a little dried venison and hard bread, sleeping in the woods, often fighting sleep when the snow lay thick on the ground, keeping at a distance a frosty death by hymns and homilies, shouted to the glory of God in the keen air.

Their stipends were almost naught, their parish coterminous with the trails of the savages or the slash roads of the settlers, their license to preach was contained in one inspiring sentence in a little leather-covered book; their churches and rectories wherever under the sky might be found human hearts to reach, and native hospitality. They met the opposition which they frequently encountered, each in his



FIRST CHURCH, EDMONTON, 1882-1902

The Call of the West

own way, but no threats of hanging or of stripes could push them from their appointed path. As settlements increased, their circuits became smaller; their people reared churches and the hardness of their lives was softened, but their zeal was unquenchable. Fanatics they undoubtedly were, yet they were cast as salt into the society of that day to preserve it on the one hand from ecclesiastical fanaticism, and upon the other from the corruption of the lawless and ignorant.

That is a worthy tribute to worthy men, and might well serve as a memorial to all the Christian noblemen of Western Canada, but of none was it more apt than in the case of Robertson. He lived on the trail.

He writes:

To-night we are to lodge in a place 7 ft. by 12 ft. partitioned off from the stable. A lot of hay covers the floor, a rusty stove is standing in the corner which, with a rickety table, constitutes the furniture. We found a lantern which will answer for a light. The side is quite airy, the boards have shrunk a good deal—Three teams besides our own drove in here just now and are going to remain all night. I think the room will afford sufficient accommodation to enable us all to lie down.

During the next twenty years one met Robertson in all sorts of places from Winnipeg to Vancouver—in buckboards on

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the prairies, on trains in the mountains, and in wayside inns where he got his meals and wrote his letters. Once Pat Burns, now Senator and a millionaire, but at that time a struggling young business man, and then as now an ardent Roman Catholic, found him asleep on the hard seats of a colonist car in the Rockies, his long greying beard covering his breast. Burns took him back to a sleeper, and arranged that from then on he need never again eke out his bare allowance by such economies.

In 1887 Dr. James Robertson visited Knox College, Toronto. He had been in Western Canada fourteen years, and for six years had been Superintendent of Presbyterian Missions from the Red River to Vancouver. Few people knew the West as he did, and, in presenting its challenge to the young theological students of Eastern Canada, he made no attempt to sugar-coat the prospect. He told them it was no place for weaklings. He had little to offer in the way of preferment, money or comfort. In his six years as Superintendent he had covered his enormous field a dozen times by train, dog-team, buckboard and canoe. He had increased the number of missions from 129 stations to 389—a growth of 260,

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one for every week of that period. He had come recently from a meeting of the General Assembly at which a new Presbytery had been set up, including in its boundaries Indian Head, Lethbridge, Macleod, High River, Calgary, Edmonton, Red Deer, Banff, Revelstoke, and whose northern boundary was boldly set down as the Arctic Sea.

Robertson needed men, but not just any one would do. He made no appeal for volunteers. With his hawk-like eyes he searched the eastern colleges, and when he saw a man he wanted he pounced upon him and claimed him for his own.

He met David McQueen. It was after the evening meal at Knox College. Some one had conducted worship, and made eloquent and moving reference to the uncompromising challenge of Christ. Then, as the young men dispersed, Robertson's hand was on McQueen's shoulder, and the quiet, earnest voice said: "I want you for Edmonton."

David McQueen had already served his time as a missionary on difficult fields in Northern Ontario, and had thought a good deal about joining his friends, Jonathan Goforth and John and Donald Mac-

McQueen of Edmonton

Gillivray, in some part of the foreign field. He had no knowledge of the West, and if he knew where Edmonton was it was only vaguely. But Robertson's insistence could not be easily avoided nor lightly dismissed. There was much heart-searching on the part of the young man himself and his father and brother Robert. Edmonton was far away. James McQueen had looked forward to having his youngest son near him in his declining years. If he went to the far North-West, they would in all likelihood never meet again. But Robert McQueen said: "The Church has educated you, the call was unsolicited, you must go." The decision was made. When the day came to say farewell, James McQueen walked with his son over the fields on which he had spent fifty-four years of his manhood, to the top of a hill from which he could see the last flicker of the buggy wheels that carried his son away. The Scottish reserve of both men would save them the embarrassment of any great show of feeling, but Dr. McQueen said in later years: "As I looked back from the last turning in the road from which I could see the old home, I saw him standing there erect as a pine tree, his white hair shining in the sun."

CHAPTER IV

EDMONTON IN 1887

THE Assembly was meeting in Winnipeg in the summer of 1887, and David McQueen attended his first General Assembly as a licensed minister of the Presbyterian Church on his way westward to his new post. Immediately thereafter the Regina Presbytery, in session at Qu'Appelle, ordained him, and two days later he arrived in Calgary ready for the last leg of his journey. This was four years before the C.P.R. had reached Strathcona, but a stage-coach had been in operation between Calgary and Edmonton ever since the C.P.R. entered Calgary in 1883. In fact, the Edmonton *Bulletin* of August 4, 1883, contained the announcement of the inauguration of the stage service and the schedule of rates.

Edmonton and Calgary stage making weekly trips between said points, leaves Jasper House, Edmonton, at nine, and the steamboat dock at 9.30, every Monday morning, stopping at Peace Hills, Battle River, Red Deer Crossing, and Willow Creek, and arriving at Calgary on Friday. Returning, leaves Calgary Monday, stopping at same places, and arrives at Edmonton on Friday. Fare each way \$25.00, 100 lbs.

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of baggage allowed. Express matters, 10 cts. a pound. First stage leaves Edmonton on Monday, Aug. 6th, 1883. Edmonton office in Jasper House; Calgary office in Hudson's Bay Company's store.

D. McLEOD, Prop.

This line continued in operation till the C. and E. railway reached Strathcona on July 27, 1891, and many old-timers of to-day recall the journey and the stopping-places at Chamberlains, Scarletts, The Lone Pine, Blindman, Boggy Plain, Jack McCue's, and the Peace Hills farm.

It was a racking, tiresome journey of five days, but pleasant enough in summer, if the mosquitoes and black flies weren't too attentive. Nevertheless Mr. McQueen rejoiced when the creaking coach topped the hill at Strathcona, and he could see, nestling among the trees on the opposite bank of the Saskatchewan, the little outpost village he had come so far to serve. Forty-three years afterward, Dr. McQueen sat in his study, looking out over the Saskatchewan, and drew a striking word-picture of the Edmonton of that day, for the benefit of a local newspaper reporter.

The population of the town at that time was in the neighbourhood of 350. In addition to the Hudson's Bay Company's supply depot for its

Edmonton in 1887

outlying posts, there were six mercantile establishments whose stocks consisted of every imaginable thing from sides of bacon to ostrich plumes. There was also a butcher-shop, a baker's, a blacksmith shop, a land office, the *Edmonton Bulletin* printing establishment, a boat-building establishment, and a carriage-maker's shop, four churches, two schools, four hotels, a post office, telegraph office, grist-mill, saw-mill, and a brick-yard. Small settlements of homesteaders at Namao, Belmont, Stoney Plain, Clover Bar, and eastward at Beaver Lake, gave to the little village its promise of a widening agricultural industry to take the place of the receding fur-trade.

In those days the trail from Calgary was the main thoroughfare into the North, and the view, as one came to the brow of the hill on the south side of the Saskatchewan where the road dipped into the woods that covered the south bank by the side of Joe McDonald's house, was indeed a beautiful sight. A few hundred yards to the east stood the office of the Dominion Crown Timber Agent, and near by it, the home of Fred Sache. Nestling at the foot of the hill, and close by the swiftly flowing river were the home, shops and the outbuildings of John Walter—"Honest Jock," as he was very appropriately and truly called by all who knew him. Here was the original low-level bridge of the pioneer days, at least for the summer season. Across the beautiful valley on the second bench of the northern bank of the river sat the Hudson's Bay Company's Fort, while back behind on the higher ground where the magni-

McQueen of Edmonton

ificent pile of the provincial buildings is now being reared, stood the "Big House," the home of the Hudson's Bay Company's factor, and the rendezvous and resting-place of all "the Company's" officers travelling to and from the North. There were "the seats of the mighty" indeed, for here also was a detachment of the North-West Mounted Police. The one represented the old régime and the other the transition stage between the old and the new order of things. Here and there among the trees that then covered the higher slopes was to be seen a house peering out as a watchman on an ancient city wall, scanning and scrutinizing the trail from the South and all that came over it. As one looked upon these sentinels and signs of human life he naturally wondered what lay beyond. If in ancient days "all roads led to Rome," one might say "all trails led to Edmonton," which, though but scarcely a village in those days, had all the outlines and indications of a great city—location and aspiration. It is indeed wonderful how the railways have followed, and are still following, the old trails surveyed and travelled by these born engineers of pioneer days. Thus early was Edmonton marked out as the city of destiny in the West. The trails in the immediate vicinity meandered out and in among the trees and open spaces in a way that spoke of the freedom and leisure of a certain kind, that belonged to those who travelled them.

The one event that broke in with unceasing regularity upon this serene, sylvan-like scene was the arrival of the weekly stage from

Edmonton in 1887

Calgary on Monday evenings. It brought the express, the mail and at rare intervals a passenger from the outside world.

Certain portions of the express—a permitted "spiritual" import—always possessed great attraction for a few whose affinities had a trend that way. One was reminded on the morning after the arrival of the stage of the words "For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together," and it is said that there never was any need of the injunction to "gather up the fragments that remain that nothing be lost."

The mail, though from ten days to a fortnight in coming through from the East, was of interest to a much larger number, but the all-absorbing object of interest was the occasional passenger. About four o'clock in the afternoon of Monday the citizens began to congregate about the old post office located where College Avenue crosses First Street through to Second, and which was kept in his own way by A. D. Osborne, familiarly known as "Dad." From then on until all the mail was sorted, received and mostly read, you might find almost any citizen about the place. It was either "Big" or "Little" Pete Campbell, the driver of the stage, who was under the fire of questions about the passenger. "Who is he? whence cometh he? what seeketh he? and whither goeth he?" was the usual fusillade to which the Petes were subjected. Through long practice, and when they wished, those of the Campbell clan were adepts at evasion in reply. But it showed that, after all, the most absorbing thing and the

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thing of deepest interest to all men is man himself. They say that there is no rest for the wicked, and there was no rest here until some at least, if not all, of the above questions had been answered.

The hamlet was in some ways like one large family with no social or other lines of demarcation drawn, and an intruder from the outside world was thus compelled to account for his presence. True, there were feuds in those days, but as the Scotch would say, when they "fell oot" they "aye made it up again," and woe betide any outside interference in these little differences "amang oorsel's," for the old-timers were "maistly Scotch," a fact which has accounted for much of the world's progress, and which played its part here as well as in other places. Just think of some of the names—McDougall, Fraser, Cameron, McDonald, McLeod, Stewart, Robertson, McKay, Bannerman, Brown, Norris, Walker, Taylor, Ross, the Hudson's Bay Company's contingent, and many others in this and other parts of the West. With such forbears and such foundations and materials at hand, what may we not become where Alberta's sunny fountains "roll down their golden sands"?

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the spade work of the Church's advancing programme of missions in the Far West had already been done. Edmonton had had its priests and apostles of various denominations for almost fifty years. The

Edmonton in 1887

Presbyterians had been late in arriving, but Rev. A. B. Baird had occupied the field for six years, and in that time had seen many changes. He had just been appointed to a chair in Manitoba Theological College, and planned to leave shortly after McQueen's arrival for Eastern Canada.

CHAPTER V

BEGINNINGS

REV. A. B. BAIRD had been sent to Edmonton in response to repeated requests from the little band of Presbyterians gathered in and about Fort Edmonton. He had just returned from post-graduate work in Edinburgh and Germany, after a distinguished career as a student at the University of Toronto and Knox College. The C.P.R. had not yet reached the prairie, so Mr. Baird, upon arriving in Winnipeg, bought a horse, buckboard, tent, cooking utensils, and a supply of provisions. Thus equipped, he started the long journey to Edmonton, arriving on October 29, 1881. His first service was held on November 3rd in the Methodist Church, which had been loaned by the Methodist congregation. A meeting was called for November 5th to meet in James MacDonald's carpenter shop, which stood near the north-west corner of Jasper Avenue and 99th Street. At this meeting the congregation was organized and a committee appointed to secure a place of worship. Later the committee managed to secure the use of the upstairs of a building

Beginnings

on Jasper Avenue, immediately opposite the end of Fraser Avenue or 98th Street.

Four months after Mr. Baird's arrival, the congregation decided to solicit subscriptions for the purpose of building a church on the site of four lots donated by the Hudson's Bay Company through the good offices of Mr. James McDougall, who was in charge of the Hudson's Bay post at that time. The site given was on the north-west corner of 104th Street and MacKay Avenue or 99th Avenue, where the manse of First Presbyterian Church now stands.

Mr. Baird held his first communion service in 1881, and on that occasion added to the membership roll of the newly-organized congregation nine charter members, whose names are as follows:

Mr. George A. Blake	Mrs. Allan Omand
Mr. Hugh McKay	Mrs. James Goodridge
D. S. McKay	Mrs. Thomas Henderson
Mrs. Alfred Hutchings	Mr. James A. Petrie
Mrs. Phillip Heiminck	

These names, together with those of Dr. Baird and Dr. McQueen, may be seen carved in stone at the entrance to the present church.

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The new church was formally opened on November 5, 1882, exactly one year from the time the first service was held in the Methodist Church, and it remained the home of the congregation until July 13, 1902, when a new brick church, on the south-west corner of Jasper Avenue and 103rd Street was built.

The church erected in 1882 under Mr. Baird's direction was an imposing structure for the time and place. It was fifty by thirty feet, with fourteen-foot walls, and a basement fourteen by thirty-five feet. It had four "gothic windows" on each side, was heated by a furnace, and had a seating capacity of a little over one hundred.

But Mr. Baird was not content to spend his days in and about Edmonton. Services were immediately started at Belmont, Sturgeon River, Fort Saskatchewan and Clover Bar. He managed to get theological students for these fields during the summer months, but the whole burden fell upon his own shoulders in winter, when the students returned east to their colleges. Baird was a vigorous young man and thrived on hard work. A church was built at the Sturgeon, and the minister helped get out the logs.

Dr. Baird has many interesting stories to

Beginnings

tell of those early days. One that is well known to all his friends has to do with a double baptism in which he played an important part. Apparently the young minister had conceived the idea of having all baptisms performed in the church. The ordeal of standing in front of a congregation with a squalling baby never did appeal strongly to young fathers as a pleasant way to spend Sunday morning. One young couple in particular could not get up courage enough to face the ordeal and bring their baby boy to the church. It happened that a member of Father Grouard's flock, a French girl by the name of Veronique, had been employed as nursemaid for the youngster, and she became greatly concerned about the unregenerate condition of her charge. One day, before taking the boy for his daily walk, she was seen to array herself in ceremonial garb, but no questions were asked. When she returned, however, she announced triumphantly: "Well, I've had him baptized. Father Grouard did it." The very next Sunday the parents of the child appeared before the Presbyterian minister and asked that the ceremony be repeated.

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After McQueen arrived, the two men lived together in a three-roomed cottage which Baird had built himself. They had much in common; they had graduated from the same institution and had come from the same Province. They took to each other at once.

But there was no disposition on Mr. Baird's part to make it too easy for the tenderfoot; he was appointed cook for the establishment, and had to do his share of the housework generally. Andrew Grant had been the student in charge of the outlying fields that summer, and had put in a large crop of potatoes on the land near the manse. One of the first questions Mr. Baird asked David McQueen was: "Can you plough?" After which, with Mr. Baird leading the horse, the two young men proceeded to cultivate the potatoes. An evidence of their zeal is shown by the fact that, before Mr. Baird left, the potatoes were sold for forty dollars and the money sent to the Home Mission Committee at Toronto.

Mr. Baird immediately set his assistant at work on the mission field to such good purpose that David McQueen, writing to his sister on July 27, 1887, says:

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I am so deep in that I don't know whether the job is running me or I am running it. Preaching three times a Sunday and driving from ten to twenty miles is no fun, you may be sure. The field is a large one, comprising five regular preaching appointments. These are: Edmonton, Belmont, Fort Saskatchewan, Clover Bar, and Sturgeon. Mr. Baird and I keep "Bachelors' Hall" in his house—You ought to see our housekeeping, meals at all hours. Mr. Baird tells me that when salt came down to 3 lbs. for \$1.00 and sugar the same, they were getting it cheap. Sugar is now 6 lbs. for \$1.00 and everything else in proportion.

Living on a salary of a few hundred dollars a year was difficult enough under normal conditions, but with flour at fifteen to twenty-five dollars a hundredweight, when there was any for sale, which was only at intervals, or when the staple food of the country outside the towns was largely whitefish and game of various kinds, the business of housekeeping and providing meals at all hours was difficult enough.

It was not surprising, therefore, that as soon as Mr. Baird left for Winnipeg, Mr. McQueen went to live with his nephew, James Martin, schoolteacher, who with his wife occupied a house near the present municipal golf links.

CHAPTER VI

MCQUEEN TAKES CHARGE

THE first four years of David McQueen's life in Edmonton were strenuous, lean years. Almost his first work after coming to Edmonton was to get out logs for a new church at Fort Saskatchewan. Service at the fort had been held for several years in the police barracks, but in Mr. Baird's last year, assisted by the settlers, he had hauled out enough logs for a church and piled them on the site chosen for the building. But some enterprising settler, who was convinced that the first duty of a church was to provide "shelter in a time of storm," had removed the logs under cover of darkness, and presumably had built himself a "more stately mansion." No doubt Mr. McQueen smiled grimly to himself at this further evidence of the western spirit of give and take. At any rate, he set to work to replace the stolen lumber, and when the spring of 1888 arrived he was able to announce the opening of a new church at Fort Saskatchewan. Taking no chance of their being stolen a second time, he built them into the edifice almost as soon as they

McQueen Takes Charge

were cut down. Then, with characteristic energy, he proceeded to Clover Bar and soon had a church under way at that point.

Day after day, in the summer of 1888, the young minister was up at daybreak and on his way to Clover Bay with hammer and saw. A great part of the time he worked alone. He was never happier than when building, and he had a natural gift for carpentry. Doors and windows had to be hand-made and fitted. It was a crude structure when completed, and bore little resemblance to that other temple of David of Bible story, but into its framework was woven the same inspired dream of a temple not made with hands, whose builder and maker is God.

Difficult, but happy days; for the young man David had his hands on a man's work, and as he drank in the morning sunshine and the clear, dry air of the prairies, that intangible thing, so often referred to as "the spirit of the West," took possession of him for ever. In a letter written at this time, he says:

I spent Monday putting on the finishing touches to the pulpit at Clover Bar, and putting the battens on the gable ends. On Monday and Tuesday of next week I purpose going with

McQueen of Edmonton

another man to plaster between the logs of the building, and then it will be ready for services. My next building job will be the unfinished school at Stony Plain. We opened the school with three children, but expect to get more.

When it is recalled that roads were often impassable; and that all travel had to be undertaken by saddle, buckboard or jumper, and that it frequently required four hours to drive to Fort Saskatchewan, it may be concluded that Mr. McQueen had little time for study or the preparation of sermons. In fact, this difficulty was giving him considerable anxiety.

I try (he writes) to prepare two sermons a week, but I am sure not with the best success. When one's mind is full of other things necessarily laid upon it, it is really hard work to concentrate on the real work of the pastor. I am quite certain it is ruining me so far as getting up sermons is concerned; but it must be done for the present at least. In my second year in theology the Doctor spoke very highly about my sermon read before the class, but I am positive the good old Doctor would require the inspiration of a good draft of snuff—he was a great snuffer—before he could say anything nice about my present productions. It appears to me that holding an outpost like this tries a man's mettle as nothing else can do. I suppose it is the shadow necessary to lend beauty to the landscape of life. It is comparatively easy



DAVID GEORGE MCQUEEN
As a Young Man.



DR. AND MRS. MCQUEEN
In front of the old manse. The horse is
"John," the faithful companion of many
years.

McQueen Takes Charge

to do brave and dashing things when inspired by the enthusiasm of numbers, but how often one is forced to fall back and rest upon the foundations of one's faith.

Meanwhile, the minister was making great progress in the affection and loyalty of his congregation. Particularly was this true with the young men of the settlement. He was a first-class curler and baseball player, and had a keen interest in sports of all kinds. The embarrassment so often shown by hard-boiled westerners in the presence of a "sky-pilot" soon disappeared when the fur-buyers, freighters, policemen and young business men of the town began to appreciate the minister's sense of humour and his capacity for enjoyment.

A story is told of the early days which well illustrates McQueen's tact and understanding of human nature. A certain young man, who later became one of Edmonton's most distinguished citizens, was at that time drinking very heavily and wasting his life generally in riotous living common to young men on the frontier. One night when he was so drunk he could scarcely walk, he met McQueen. Pulling himself up with an absurd attempt at dignity, he apologized and said: "I am

McQueen of Edmonton

sorry, sir, to have you see me in this condition." McQueen put his hand on the young man's shoulder and said: "Well, Bill, don't lose your grip," and that was all. It was far more effective than an admonitory prayer or a long dissertation. The words haunted the young man: "Don't lose your grip"—that's exactly what he was doing. As he now tells the story, that was the end of his foolishness.

The young minister's easy grace and charming smile also endeared him to the women of the congregation. A story, told by Mrs. McQueen and which she says may not be true, has to do with a Scotch mother whose daughter was very ill with scarlet fever, and in her distress she summoned a clergyman of one of the other churches. The clergyman, noting the soft Scotch burr in the woman's voice, tried vainly to place her in his own congregation. Failing to do so, he asked her what church she attended, to which she replied: "Maister McQueen's." "Is Mr. McQueen out of town, then, since you sent for me?" asked the preacher. "Na, na," she replied, "but we wad na risk oor dear Davie McQueen in the hoose wi' a case o' scarlet fever."

From the very beginning the young

McQueen Takes Charge

minister took an active interest in all matters having to do with the improvement of civic affairs, particularly in relation to problems of school management and discipline. Although he had probably never shared the intolerance of the growing number of rabid teetotallers in the Church of the time, he nevertheless hated the traffic in liquor, and noted with concern the ravages of excessive drinking and the power of those who made their living by it.

On matters of civic betrayal he could be depended upon to speak with no uncertain tongue.

There is a meeting of the School Board to-night (he writes in 1889) to bring M— (the school-teacher) to time. I may go to the meeting and if I do I will make it pretty hot for M— and a saloon-keeper who disgraces the Board by his presence among the members. But so strong is the whiskey power in this place that it is difficult to keep such men out. You know, as I suppose most people do, that M— is not what he ought to be. I have borne with such conduct as long as I intend to, both in church and school, and family.

In another letter of the same date, he writes:

The spiteful tongue and malicious activities of Mrs.— are the cause of great trouble and

McQueen of Edmonton

distress in my Belmont field. At my next visit I intend to take the lady in hand and put an end to this scandalous iniquity. If you hear reverberations as of an earthquake in Ontario, it will probably be the echoes of that forthcoming struggle.

In those letters speaks the tradition of centuries. Any betrayal of public confidence, any threat against the well-being of church or community, was the minister's business, and McQueen did not hesitate to use a whipping tongue if necessary.

To the end of his days Dr. McQueen never relinquished his inalienable right as a minister and a citizen to express his opinion strongly and in public on matters that concerned the good of his people.

CHAPTER VII

ADDITIONAL DUTIES

IN 1884 the North-West Council, in session at Regina, passed the first school ordinance of the North-West Territories, and thus laid the foundations of the public-school system we have in Alberta to-day. A bill to establish public and separate schools had been introduced by Mr. Frank Oliver of Edmonton the previous year, and the Act of 1884 was based upon the plan drawn up at that time.

According to this Act, the Lieutenant-Governor, by proclamation, could establish a school district on receipt of returns showing that a majority of the qualified voters, in any area of not more than thirty-six square miles, voted in favour of establishing a school therein. As a result of this legislation, the number of schools in the North-West Territories increased in one year from seventeen Protestant and eleven Roman Catholic in Saskatchewan and Alberta, to forty-eight Protestant and fifteen Roman Catholic schools. Inspectors of schools were appointed throughout the Territories, the majority of whom were clergymen of the various denominations.

McQueen of Edmonton

The inspectors within the boundaries of Alberta were appointed in 1886. Rev. John McLean and Mr. J. N. Costello were the Protestant and Catholic inspectors in the Calgary-Macleod district, and Rev. A. B. Baird and Father L'Estrange in the Edmonton district. When Mr. Baird left Edmonton in the fall of 1887, David McQueen took over his duties as Inspector of Schools, the appointment being announced in the *Edmonton Bulletin* of December 24, 1887.

For the next few years, when Mr. McQueen was not building churches, preparing sermons, attending Presbytery meetings, or attending to the thousand and one duties of a parson, he was inspecting schools. The old-timers, who recall what the Victoria trail was like forty years ago, will appreciate the difficulties which could, under certain weather conditions, beset a journey to Pagan or Smoky Lake for the purpose of inspecting a school of ten children.

I am to be away all week (says the minister-inspector) inspecting the school at Victoria. I have to carry enough provisions to do myself and horse for the whole week, and very likely I shall forget something. A young fellow

Additional Duties

named Ross is going with me and we shall have to sleep under the cold blue canopy of heaven for one night each way on the trip. We might reach an Indian house for that night, but one is always in danger of bringing away more live-stock than he lay down with. They are exceedingly lively, too. I would rather risk chances with a cold than with these grey racers anyway.

The trip to Victoria required two days' travel, during which time the two men camped under the stars and cooked by the trail. McQueen's comments on the well-known view of the Saskatchewan; from the top of the hill near the entrance to the Indian Reserve, is worth quoting.

You can see the Saskatchewan for a distance of three or four miles, with its high banks on either side, terraced with the dark dull grey of the unbudded poplar, and the monotony relieved here and there by a solitary spruce, or patches of them, pointing heavenward. The settlement at Victoria (he goes on to say) is half-breed. They are old buffalo-hunters, the most useless class of people you can imagine, living all the time, since the extinction of the buffalo, on the limits of starvation. The school had an attendance of 12 the day I was there. The poor things, cursed by heredity, have little chance in this world, and their prospects for the future are not very bright. There was not a single white child in the whole

McQueen of Edmonton

outfit, and some of them were black as negroes. The farthest advanced was only beginning the second book; as a result of inter-marrying, a low state of morality in some cases, and a lack of ambition and independence, we see this shiftless lot of human beings almost about to be swept out of existence.

While the responsibility for school inspection added heavily to the duties of his pastorate, the young minister found it a valuable opportunity to meet the people of the country, and for four years he continued to supervise the schools of the northern district, which included Edmonton, Namao, Belmont, Poplar Lake, Red Deer, Victoria and Stony Plain, and Clover Bar. In this way he became acquainted with every man, woman and child in Northern Alberta, and for years afterward—in many cases till the time of his death—the old-timers continued to regard him as the man to whom they had a peculiar right to turn in times of trouble or rejoicing. He baptized their children, buried their dead, and, in the forty-three years of his ministry, married over five thousand persons.

The total population of Alberta in 1887 was less than seventeen thousand. But,

Additional Duties

with this slight background of settlement, the members of the Board of Education from Alberta began to impress upon the Federal Government at Ottawa the necessity for immediate action in the matter of grants for high schools, a central training school for teachers, and the provision of land grants for universities in the provisional districts of Assiniboia, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

A compromise was arranged in the matter of high schools and training centres by an ingenious organization of "union schools." When two or three adjacent districts, with an aggregate attendance of sixty pupils and not less than three teachers were employed, and where not less than fifteen pupils from such schools had passed the High School Entrance examination, the trustees were to furnish accommodation and equipment for a high-school course, and the Board of Education might then authorize a Normal Department.

The staff of the Normal School in each case was to be made up of the principals of the union schools, assisted by the inspectors.

In all this agitation for better school facilities, Rev. David McQueen and Mr.

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Frank Oliver took an active and aggressive part. The result was that in 1892 the Board of Education of the North-West Territories was replaced by the Council of Public Instruction, which was composed of the members of the Executive Council of the Legislative Assembly, and two Protestant and two Catholic members to act in an advisory capacity.

Dr. Goggin, of Manitoba, was appointed Superintendent of Schools for the whole North-West, and a new ordinance was passed, requiring that all inspectors should have completed a course of Normal training. According to the new regulations, Mr. McQueen was released from the arduous duties of his inspectorate.

Today, with a well-equipped university, having an average yearly enrolment of over fifteen hundred students, and with Normal, Technical and High Schools as up to date as similar institutions anywhere, and with over three thousand public schools in the Province, the citizens of Alberta have reason to look back with gratitude to the little band of pioneers who laboured so hard to provide for the sons and daughters of this new land an adequate system of education.

Additional Duties

All through his long pastorate of forty-three years in Edmonton, Dr. McQueen continued his interest in education—an interest that was fittingly recognized when, in 1917, as a member of the Senate of the University of Alberta, he was granted an honorary LL.D. by that institution.

CHAPTER VIII

IN JOURNEYS OFT

THE year Mr. McQueen arrived in Edmonton a new Presbytery was formed by the General Assembly which was called "the Calgary Presbytery," and included all of Alberta, a part of Western Saskatchewan, and a good deal of Southern British Columbia—in fact, all the country south of the C.P.R. as far as Revelstoke. There were Presbyterian ministers settled at Medicine Hat, Calgary, Lethbridge, High River, Macleod, and in British Columbia at Donald, Banff and Revelstoke. Presbytery meetings were held in March and September, the March meeting being the more important, as, from that session, the claims for mission grants and men were forwarded to the Assembly for the following summer. Mr. McQueen had been over a year in Edmonton before he attended his first Presbytery meeting. As we have seen, a trip to Calgary required five days each way, and cost fifty dollars in transportation alone. In March, 1889, he attended the meeting at Medicine Hat.

Going down (he says), we crossed the Red Deer River on the ice, though there were two

In Journeys Of

feet of water running over it. It is safe enough to cross when the ice is under water, but when it comes up, it becomes honeycombed and then it is unsafe. It was rather fearsome-looking as we approached, but as Pete, the stage-driver, remarked: "It's all right if we don't get into holes."

The crossing was made safely, but on the way back a few days later, the ice had come to the top with a stream of water ten feet wide on each side, but "Little Pete" Campbell was a resourceful and competent gentleman. The horses were unhitched; two planks were shoved across the stretch of water, and the stage-coach was gingerly guided across the stream. But in the middle, one wheel slipped off, and went out of sight, so everything had to be unloaded and carried out on the ice. When we got loaded up, Pete said, "You go ahead and find the best place to cross." I did so and Pete put the whip to the horses and with a terrific burst of speed and flying water, succeeded in getting through and up the bank. Meanwhile I had to walk upstream to a fallen tree to get over.

It will be seen from the foregoing description that the trip to Presbytery was one that presented possibilities of high adventure, and a journey to Calgary was only to be undertaken after careful consideration.

Mr. McQueen's salary might be anything from five hundred to seven hundred and

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fifty dollars, and fifty dollars for transportation was a heavy charge. In fact, his first year's salary was one hundred and seventy dollars, and it was not until he was married and had four children that Dr. McQueen's salary passed the thousand-dollar-a-year mark.

In 1889, two years after his arrival in Edmonton, David McQueen made his first trip East. The Assembly was meeting that year in Toronto, and it was an event he had looked forward to with keen interest for several months. It was robbed of its pleasures on the way down when he received word of his father's serious illness. According to the family physician, the old gentleman kept himself alive by sheer force of will until his son's arrival. He knew his step on the verandah, and was able to speak to him, but died that afternoon.

Yet if it was a sad home-coming for David McQueen, it was a memorable one in other ways, for it was on the occasion of his father's death that he first met Catherine Robertson, who later became his wife. Although the young people had been brought up within six miles of each other, and had known each other by name since childhood, they had never met before.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ON 103RD STREET
Used from 1902-1912.

In Journeys Oft

In addition to the regular meetings of Presbytery, and occasional trips to Assembly once a year, Mr. McQueen attended the Synod which met alternately in British Columbia and Alberta, since in those days Alberta formed a part of the Synod of British Columbia.

A letter from the Rev. Dr. E. D. McLaren, of Vancouver, dated May 3, 1933, states:

Our real acquaintance began when I was appointed Convener of the Synod's Home Mission Committee. The Committee met every spring and fall and was composed of McQueen, Herdman of Calgary, Wilson of the interior of B.C., and Mr. Clay of Victoria; and myself representing the lower mainland. The meetings were held in my study. We had with us at every meeting "The Great Superintendent" (James Robertson), whom we all loved and revered. We got to work at nine o'clock, and, with the exception of the lunch and dinner hours (when we adjourned to the dining-room), we continued at work till one or two o'clock in the morning. The meetings lasted about two days and a half, and you can readily understand that in such circumstances we soon realized the kind of friend and fellow-worker we had in McQueen. We discovered something about the splendid work he was doing in Alberta and learned to admire his sound judgment, his boundless energy, his loyalty to the cause of

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Christ and the Church, his spirit of brotherliness and, not least, his keen sense of humour. He was always a man of large heart, kindly spirit and genial disposition, with high ideals and noble purposes. He possessed strong convictions to which he was never afraid to give expression. He was admired even, then by all young men, and respected and trusted by men of greater age and experience.

By the very complexity of their lives, and the astonishing breadth of their experiences, the great men of Western Canada have been shaped to their destiny. Men like David McQueen in the Church and Frank Oliver in politics were distinguished always by a soundness of judgment, a fearlessness in controversy, and a sense of justice that had its roots in a long experience of the most intimate needs and desires of the people they served.

CHAPTER IX

MARRIED AND SETTLED DOWN

IN a letter to his sister, dated July 10, 1888, David McQueen writes:

They all tell me I would be better if I were married to the right kind of a woman. But that is just where the trouble comes in, and, besides, at present I see no way of keeping any more than myself. Furniture here is very dear. The common chair on which I am sitting at present cost \$4.00, and I had to put it together myself. I paid two dollars and fifty cents for a granite water-pitcher, and eight dollars and fifty cents for a mattress, and everything else in proportion. It would take a fortune to furnish a house in good style in this part of the world.

When he went to the Assembly meeting, in 1889, Mr. McQueen no doubt had his eyes open. He needed a wife, but somewhere in the back of his head was a fairly clear-cut idea of the kind of woman he wanted. Galt seemed to be a good place to look for one. His friend, Baird, had found a good wife there, and in one of McQueen's letters to his sister he suggests in a joking way, that she might be looking the young women of St. Andrew's Church over to see if she could pick one for him.

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But when he met Catherine Robertson, there was no more joking about a wife, or planning to pick one as one would choose an article of furniture. Mr. McQueen's problem was settled, and he knew it. These are reserved and undemonstrative people, and it is impossible that either of them should ever babble about "love at first sight." They admit, however, a mutual attraction, and in one of those rare occasions, on which the good Doctor McQueen allowed himself a moment of sentimental dissipation, he writes from the East to say that he had just visited the spot, where years before he had asked Catherine Robertson to be his wife.

They were married on September 23, 1890, at Strabane, Ont., and immediately proceeded to Western Canada, making the trip to Edmonton from Calgary by buckboard. Mr. McQueen had driven "Old John" to Calgary on his way East and left him in the care of William Short, later Mayor of Edmonton and a well-known lawyer, who at that time was teaching school outside of Calgary. The people of the congregation knew at once that their minister had chosen wisely and well. With her dignity and charm of manner, Mrs.

Married and Settled Down

McQueen won all hearts, and has continued through all the years since that time to hold the love and respect of all who have known her.

To be a good minister's wife is still one of the world's most difficult vocations. It was even more difficult forty years ago in a pioneer community. The minister's home belonged to the congregation, and his wife had to be prepared to serve meals and beds at any hour of the day or night for visiting ministers, theological students on their way to summer mission fields, or members of the congregation waiting for trains or having just arrived. To all the flotsam and jetsam of Presbyterianism, the minister's house was a sanctuary in the old days, and very often the minister and his wife wished to have it so.

In addition, choir practices, meetings of the Ladies' Aid Societies, missionary leagues, and Sunday-school committees were held in the manse. It saved opening and heating the church, and if, as was usually the case, the manse was built on adjoining property, it had to serve as a kind of community kitchen to provide hot coffee and mashed potatoes for the countless "feeds" that were arranged throughout the

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year. One wonders why it is that, in the books written about ministers of the Gospel, so little space is given to the minister's wife. Her labours are never ended, for, added to the care of her children, is the responsibility of advising and comforting a hundred other mothers. As far back as I can remember my father's house was a sort of stopping-house for every foot-loose wanderer in the country. It was a place where children waited for "second" table, and gave up their beds at all hours to ardent young student missionaries or travelling elders. A minister's wife had no life of her own. She must have no intimate friends, and a new hat or dress was regarded as an extravagance for which the people had eventually to pay. She had to be able to pray and sing and preside at meetings. I am not exaggerating when I say that in many of my father's congregations certain members of the church regarded my mother as the "hired girl" of the congregation. She was expected to be able to cook, wash, make over clothing, nurse the sick, comfort the dying, and, if necessary, preach the sermons, play the organ, and sweep out the

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church. In fact, at a time when a serious accident incapacitated my father for six months, my mother preached three times every Sunday for several weeks.

Dr. McQueen never for one moment doubted that God had called him to the ministry, nor did he ever doubt that God had just as definitely sent him the most wonderful woman in the world. Few people will question either of those convictions. Mrs. McQueen came to Edmonton in 1890, one year before the coming of the railway. She has been as truly a part of the history of Edmonton and its surrounding district since that time as her distinguished husband.

In September, 1921, Dr. and Mrs. McQueen were invited to the home of Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Hutton for dinner. During the evening the telephone rang. An imperative message from the manse announced that a pair of happy lovers was waiting for the minister to perform the marriage ceremony, and urged that he return at once. An automobile was placed at his disposal, and when Dr. and Mrs. McQueen approached the manse they discovered that the house had been taken

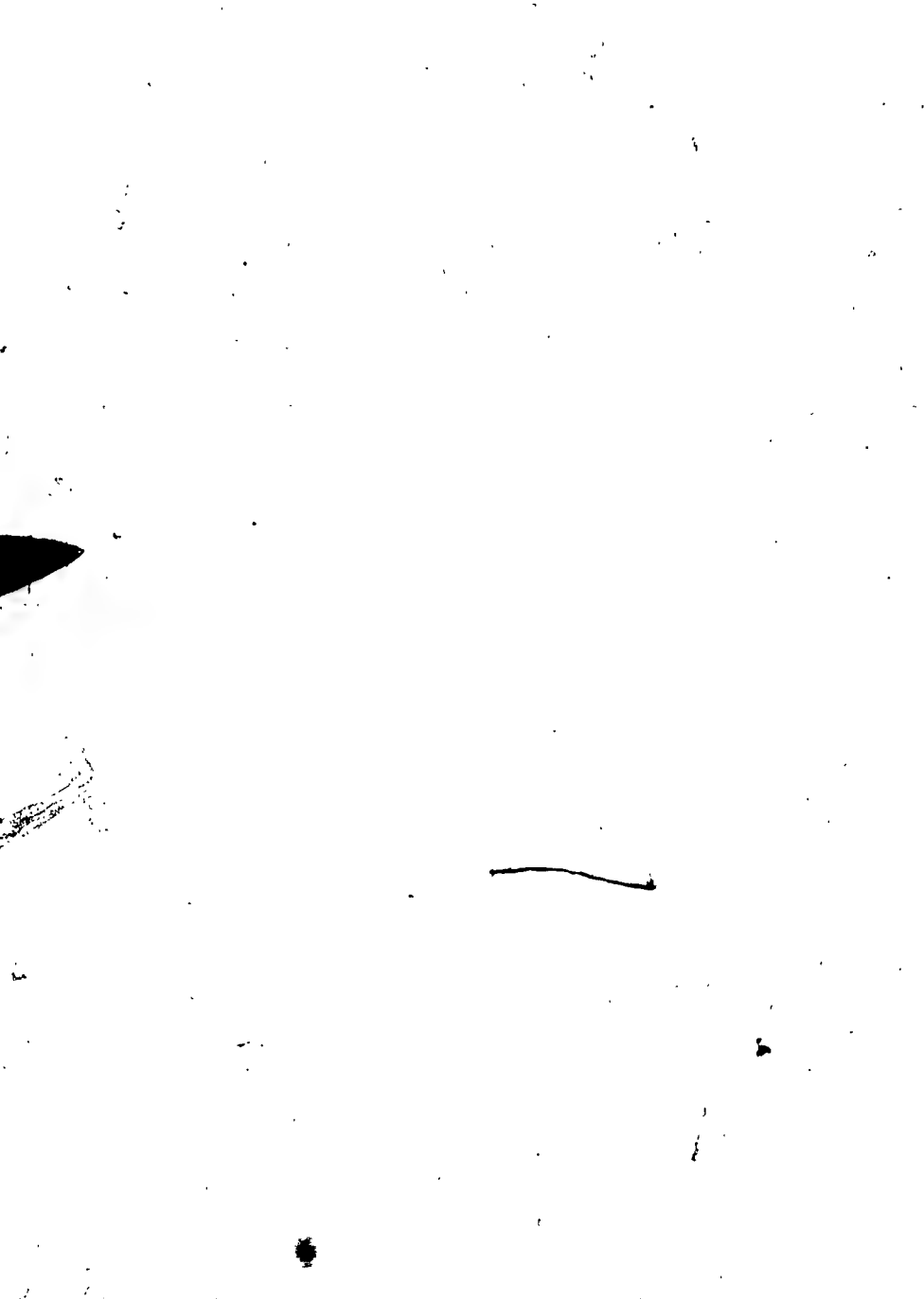
McQueen of Edmonton

possession of by a company of over seventy people. As they entered they were showered with confetti, and Mrs. McQueen was handed a bouquet of flowers. The bride and groom were then led to a position in front of Principal Millar, of Robertson College, who stood holding an immense Webster's dictionary in his hands, and solemnly pledged Dr. McQueen to love, honour and obey his wife as long as they two should live. Dr. McQueen, taking a defiant look at Webster's dictionary, declared that he was entirely "flabbergasted" and could make no promises. Such genial and heartfelt scenes as this declare more sincerely than any solemn protestation the genuine love and devotion of a people, and it is safe to say it warmed the hearts of the faithful couple more than a more formal affair could possibly have done.

Mr. and Mrs. McQueen lived for the first two years in a rented house near where MacKay Avenue School now stands, and here James, the oldest child, was born. In 1892 the old brown manse, which still stands on 104th Street, was built. Mr. McQueen had always shown sound business judgment, and it was his suggestion that the manse should be built and that the



FAMILY GROUP TAKEN IN 1912



Married and Settled Down

rent he was then paying should be used to carry the interest charges on any debt involved. The second house remained the home of the family until the present manse was built in 1911, and there six children—Alexander, Marjorie, Robert, Christina, Jean and Helen—were born.

CHAPTER X

THE CONGREGATION IN 1890

THE congregation of First Presbyterian Church in 1890, when Mrs. McQueen first came to Edmonton, was made up of all sorts and conditions of people; but they were a warm-hearted and friendly crowd, and, in spite of the crudeness of the building, there was a warmth of fellowship and a sincerity in worship that the old-timers look back upon, now, with a feeling of regret for its passing.

Augustus Bridle, the well-known journalist and critic, in an article written at the time when Dr. McQueen was Moderator of the General Assembly, gives us an entertaining and vivid picture of a Sunday service in First Presbyterian Church in the nineties. Bridle was in Edmonton during those years and led Dr. McQueen's choir.

Some Sundays nearly half of the congregation would be half-breeds, many of whom had married white men. There was little about the old six-windowed, brown-yellow church, with the porch in front, to make it look like a kirk; but when McQueen rose to preach, you knew well by his accent and his grim fervour that none of his ancestors ever could have been either

The Congregation in 1890

Methodists or Roman Catholics. And the tunes for the day were most of them the grand old folk songs of faith that precentors used to sing away back in Dundee and Aberdeen.

This Scot, born in Ontario, but as Scottish as the historic thistle, peculiarly belonged to that north prairie picture—for Scottish fur-traders had occupied those plains and valleys for centuries, and he had followed in the tradition of the greatest of all Canadian Presbyterians and Scotsmen, James Robertson.

In McQueen's church there were Frank Oliver, the democratic king of elections and editorials, and all his large family; John McDougall, first and greatest of modern fur-trading merchants in Western Canada; C. W. Cross, who afterwards became Attorney-General; Thomas Hourston, of silken whiskers, Scottish as heather, dealer in peltries; Dr. MacKay, Hudson's Bay Factor from Fort Resolution; W. J. Walker, dry-goods merchant from Edinburgh, with burrs in all his R's; Phil. Heiminck, trailsman; Sutter, immigration agent; Dave Collins, broncho-buster from Bruce County; Bob McIntyre from Glasgow, who sang tenor-heroic; Tom Lavoie from Quebec; Wm. Heathcote, Englishman and a tenor, bank messenger, who for years operated a gold "grizzly" on the beach and afterwards became wealthy from land; James Reid, clerk in the Hudson's Bay Company, who sang baritone; Potter, the auctioneer, who sang double bass; Joe Kelly, wholesale grocer and piano agent, who once danced the Hallelujah chorus in his own warehouse; Mackenzie, who

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sold books and said "Parlez-vous Français" with a Scotch accent. These were some of the men to whom McQueen preached a fervent, vigorous gospel hammered into him by the hoofs of his old roan horse, "John," that for a generation he trailed from Calgary to Edmonton before the C.P.R. shot a spur-line up there. If any man now living in all the West knows those trails that have since become populous roads, McQueen is that man. He travelled them with faith, hard-tack and charity. He helped young missionaries buy bronchos and went with them to the coulees and the distant lakes, over the hills of a new Christendom which to him was peculiarly the parish of the Kirk.

Over on another jut of the same bank was the white church of the Methodists, dedicated by that other great Protestant trail missionary, George McDougall, whose body was dug from a snowdrift down in the bald-headed sheep-ranges near Calgary. And in that church were many such characters as McQueen had under his ministry. A block or two away was the more recent Anglican church, where Rev. H. A. Gray had many a half-breed and outposter. Out on the edge was the Roman Catholic church, founded by the inspiration of that marvellous contemporary of the Methodist and Presbyterian trail missionaries, Père Lacombe.

To them all, parson and people, D. G. McQueen was a sort of padre; the man who had been there when most of them came and who might continue when many of them had gone. Robertson, McDougall, Père Lacombe are all

The Congregation in 1890

dead; the work for these men was the plain work of God, upon which, doctrines and dogmas were only the scratches of history. McQueen remains. And the old Kirk! Ay, that was somehow to a trailman something unto itself; no one might tell how, not even McQueen when he became Moderator of the General Assembly. The trail, and the manless prairie and the cold old Kirk with its great box-stove, and the moccasined half-breeds and the sinewy sermons, and the stern old joyful hymns, made for McQueen a vision of the old Scotland that his fathers had left and that none of them ever could forget.

The men and women of the frontier carried into their activities, religious and secular, a whole-hearted enthusiasm and community good will that all too frequently disappeared as the frontier receded and the outpost took on the pretentiousness and formalities of city life. As a southern old-timer once said:

This was a good town in the old days. We fit enough to keep things interesting, and sometimes we drunk more snake-eye than any man should try to carry in one load; but we was all good friends. Trouble started when we decided we ought to have a cemetery. Everybody was so healthy we had to shoot a man to get her started, and right there the serpent entered Eden.

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The congregation of First Presbyterian Church remained practically stationary until the completion of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway in August, 1891. From that time on the whole district, and particularly the two towns—Strathcona and Edmonton—took on new life. Edmonton went forward by leaps and bounds; real estate values increased as building progressed, and the following years witnessed a steady growth in the size and wealth of the congregation.

Mr. McQueen was formally called and inducted into the charge on May 1, 1893. He had already received many tempting offers of larger and more lucrative pulpits, but the man's heart was in frontier work. Edmonton needed him and desired him to remain. That was for him the voice of God, and he stayed on. In 1892 the congregation built a manse and reached a self-sustaining basis on April 1, 1896.

CHAPTER XI

LOOKING BACKWARD

WHEN David McQueen came to Edmonton, the second Riel Rebellion of 1885 was just over, and the country had entered upon a period of transition with a deepened sense of security. The change-over from the well-ordered and well-disciplined life of the Hudson's Bay Company's régime had been extraordinarily slow. The vast plains of the North-West waited for the husbandman, but west of Manitoba the country was still regarded as being fit only for the fur-trade. The Palliser Report (1863) had shown clearly enough the existence of great tracts of arable land, but in the minds of prospective settlers the conquest of Western Canada was fraught with danger and discomfort. In the south, rum-runners from the western States were carrying on a thriving trade with the Indians, exchanging "Blackfoot whiskey"—one part whiskey to four parts water—for buffalo hides. The Indians were unruly and threatening; the winters were cold, and the summers consumed with blistering heat. Evidence had been given

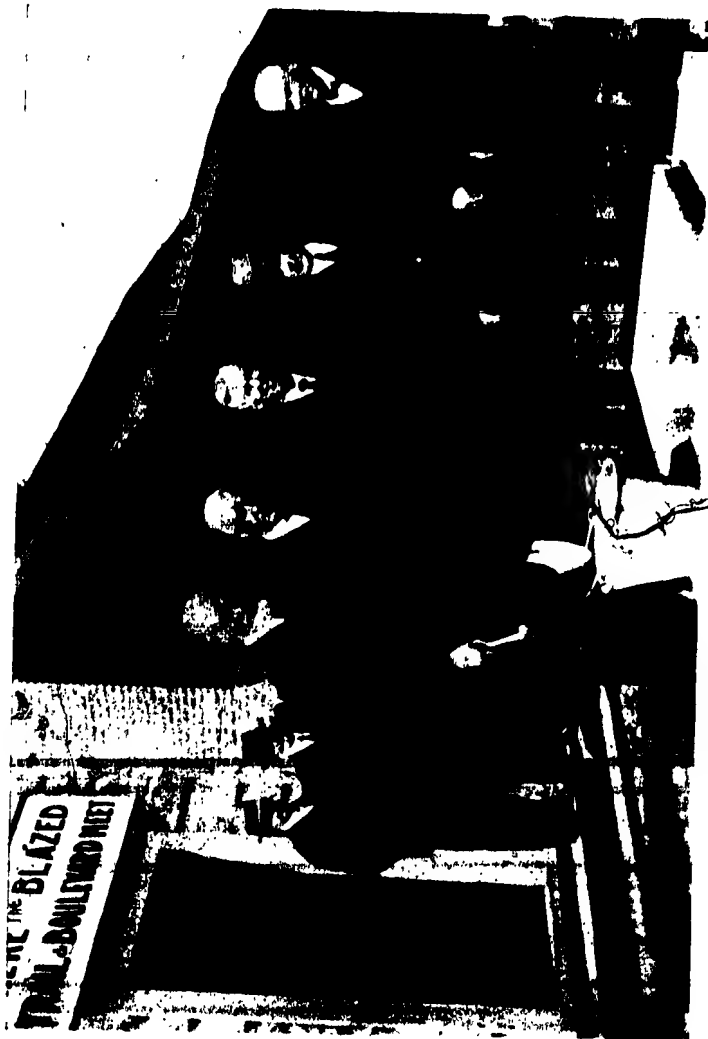
McQueen of Edmonton

by traders and explorers before the special parliamentary committee appointed by the British House of Commons in 1857 to the effect that the country was unsuited for settlement.

Sir George Simpson, fighting for a renewal of the Hudson's Bay Company's franchise, had stated that the soil was poor, and the climate so severe that the ground was frozen the whole year round. The country, he said, devoid of fuel, plagued by regular invasions of insects, and subject to long periods of drouth, would not afford the means of subsistence.

Little wonder that settlement was slow! With the coming of the Mounted Police in 1874, however, the period of lawlessness following the change from Company to Federal control disappeared, and by the early eighties a well-developed ranching industry began to take shape in Southern Alberta.

The complete defeat of Big Bear and Poundmaker in 1885 put an end to the restlessness and uncertainty of whites and Indians alike. Treaty obligations were rigidly enforced, and the Indians, deprived of the opportunity for a nomadic life by



MR. MURDOCH McLEOD, MR. CAMPBELL YOUNG, REV. D. G. McQUEEN, MR. JOHN McDONOGALL,
MR. HOWARD DOUGLAS

At the Old-Timers' Cabin in Edmonton



Looking Backward

the disappearance of the buffalo, began to settle down on their reserves. Farming settlements appeared along the trail from Calgary to Edmonton; eastward through Clover Bar, and Beaver Lake; along the Battle River near Camrose; westward around Stony Plain; and north and east along the Athabasca trail by way of Fort Saskatchewan and Namao.

With the arrival of the railroad at Calgary, in 1883, the way was opened for an unprecedented rush of settlers. The creaking Red River carts disappeared, and river transportation by way of the North Saskatchewan to Winnipeg rapidly fell off.

McQueen came at a time when traders and farmers had begun to shake hands with each other in recognition of mutual dependence. The country was becoming self-conscious. It was no longer just a wilderness dotted with isolated trading-posts. Schools, churches, roads and bridges were needed. Alberta became politically aware. Led by the aggressive and fearless Frank Oliver, the north country pressed its claims at Regina and Ottawa.

We have the richest land in Canada (said Oliver). If you don't believe it, come and see.

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... We have fertile soil, great forests, unlimited coal reserves, fish in abundance, rivers and lakes as beautiful as any in Eastern Canada, and, over all, the mighty Rockies with their hidden secrets. . . . This is the last West, and the best.

Soon they began to come, and after the railroad reached Edmonton, in 1891, settlers poured into the country in ever-increasing numbers. It was a good time to be alive; and young McQueen continued to refuse offers of easier berths. Here at Edmonton he was at the heart of a new and growing kingdom; his fingers felt its throbbing pulse, and his conviction deepened that he had come to that kingdom for such a time as this. Presbyterianism must hold its head high in this new land. Just as Oliver fought the battle of civil rights for Western Canada, McQueen fought for his Church. At meetings of Synod and at the General Assembly he pressed the claims of his wide parish of the North. He became known to Presbyterians throughout all of Canada as "McQueen of Edmonton."

The Edmonton manse was a busy place in those days. It was filled with incoming and outgoing students, ministers, settlers

Looking Backward

and travellers. Mr. and Mrs. McQueen loved the life and vigour of it all. Meanwhile the congregation of First Presbyterian Church was getting far too big for the little church erected in 1882; a new one must be built as soon as possible. In 1902 the brick building on Jasper Avenue, opposite the Hudson's Bay Company's store, was dedicated. McQueen moved among his people, serene, kindly, understanding. He knew them all, for he had been fourteen years in Edmonton, and the love of his people for him had remained as steadfast as his own sturdy heart. It is probable that he could not have gotten away from Edmonton if he had wanted to, and he was becoming more and more convinced that he had no desire to leave. He had become a part of the city's life. In civic, school and hospital affairs—wherever men met to weigh and attempt to solve the problems of a rapidly growing town and country—McQueen's judgment and influence were known and felt. Honours began to come to him. In 1907 he became Moderator of the first Synod of Alberta. Then, in 1909, he was called back to his Alma Mater to receive the degree of D.D. from Knox

McQueen of Edmonton

College, and perhaps no event in his eventful career gave him greater pleasure.

The strength of McQueen's position in Edmonton, and with his own people in particular, may be illustrated from a memorial presented to him by the Session of First Presbyterian Church at the time when he received the D.D. degree from Knox College:

TO DAVID G. McQUEEN, D.D.,
PASTOR OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
EDMONTON, ALBERTA:

Some time ago the members of your congregation were much gratified to learn that your Alma Mater had conferred upon you the distinguished Degree of Doctor of Divinity, in recognition of long and conspicuous service in the cause of Christianity in this city and in Western Canada.

As we believe that the 27th day of June last marked the close of twenty-two years of devoted labour as pastor of this congregation, we thought the time fitting to do ourselves the pleasure of asking you to accept a robe recognized by custom as the outward evidence of that honourable degree.

In presenting this robe we hope that, at such times and on such occasions as you deem fitting, you may wear it, not only as the emblem of the honour conferred on you by the college of which you are a graduate, but as

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an evidence to the world that the great seats of theological learning are not unmindful of those teachers who have kept pure and undefiled the stream of gospel truth, who have handed on untarnished to a rising generation in a new land the priceless heritage vouchsafed to the founders of the Church of Christ.

*Edmonton, Alberta,
July 5th, 1909.*

Signed on behalf of the Donors.

CHAPTER XII

THE BIRTH OF A PROVINCE

DR. McQUEEN had watched with keen interest the steps leading up to provincial status and the birth of the Province of Alberta in 1905.

In the old days of the North-West Assembly, which met at Regina, political affiliations were not sharply delineated. Men like Haultain, Oliver, and Ross of Moose Jaw, might be ardent supporters of the Liberal or Conservative parties at Ottawa; yet, in matters pertaining to the general welfare and improvement of Western Canada, they maintained a united front, and party politics were largely lost sight of in any issue demanding concerted action.

When Alberta became a Province, however, party alignments were more sharply defined, and the first provincial government of Alberta (under the leadership of the Honourable A. C. Rutherford) was a Laurier-Liberal Government, being opposed by a John MacDonald-Conservative minority. McQueen was a Liberal by training and conviction, and took his politics almost

The Birth of a Province

as earnestly as he did his religious beliefs. But he was ever a fair-minded partisan, and the proof of that lies in the fact that many of his best personal friends were strong Conservatives. Among the young men of the legislature for whom he formed a genuine attachment and respect, was the young Leader of the Conservative party, R. B. Bennett, of Calgary, now Prime Minister of Canada. In spite of differences of opinion on many political issues, the friendship between the two men did not fail even at the last, and Dr. McQueen was one of the first to congratulate Mr. Bennett when he was chosen Leader of the Conservative party of Canada, in 1927.

The basis of McQueen's political philosophy was never ambition for party or persons; it was rooted in a profound belief in equal rights for all, and a bitter hatred of any and all kinds of special privilege or injustice. Injustice he could not and would not countenance, and there are numbers of people in civic affairs in Edmonton to-day who recall that the one sure way to get Dr. McQueen into the arena of public affairs was for the city council, school or hospital boards to

McQueen of Edmonton

attempt any kind of autocratic measure leading to grave inconvenience or hardships upon the employees. In fact, Dr. McQueen was usually at his best in either Church Assembly or civic gatherings when making a fighting speech on behalf of a minority unjustly dealt with.

He was a personal friend of every member of the first Alberta Cabinet. Dr. Rutherford he had known intimately for years. "Charlie" Cross, the Attorney-General, was a member of his congregation and a friend of the early days. W. H. Cushing, Minister of Public Works, W. T. Finlay, Minister of Agriculture, and L. S. De Veber, Minister without portfolio, were men with whose records he was familiar.

The first four years in the history of the infant Province were occupied in organizing the Province along constitutional lines. In many of the questions before the Legislature during those formative years McQueen was deeply interested. Steps were taken toward the establishment of a university; school districts were organized, and a school system instituted. Taxation for secondary and elementary education was arranged. Regulations governing the liquor traffic, labour hours, workmen's

The Birth of a Province

compensation, the organization of courts of justice, were matters in which, as a minister and as a citizen, he was deeply concerned. He was a member of the senate of the University of Alberta, and one of the first to receive the degree of LL.D. from that institution.

The defeat of the Rutherford Government, over the Alberta and Great Waterways Railway transactions, and the formation of a new cabinet under the Honourable A. L. Sifton—at that time Chief Justice of Alberta—Dr. McQueen watched with distress and relief: distress that bitter conflict and doubt should have so early broken the political calm of Alberta's youth; relief when the Royal Commission's report completely exonerated the Premier and his cabinet from having any personal interest either in the scheme or the negotiations.

Meanwhile the country was filling up rapidly. Immigrants poured in on every train. By 1910 the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway had passed through Edmonton to Vancouver by way of Jasper; and branch lines of railways were being built into every part of the Province. The E.D. and B.C. line was under construction; a line to Lac

McQueen of Edmonton

la Biche, and another to St. Paul de Metis, were going forward, as well as the C.P.R. line through Camrose to Winnipeg. During 1911 over eighteen hundred miles of railways were assisted with guarantees, and by 1912 the total mileage secured by government bonds was 3,074 miles, involving \$44,098,000.

Towns were springing up everywhere, and the total population of the Province had grown from 184,412 in 1906, to 385,000 in 1911. Cities were enjoying unparalleled booms; property values rose to unbelievable heights; sub-divisions in all the towns and cities were put on the market and sold at ridiculous prices to over-enthusiastic speculators. People in every walk of life were caught up in the excitement of the moment, and paper fortunes were made overnight. Edmonton extended its limits to provide space enough for a city of a million people. First Presbyterian Church had grown with the boom. Two reasons appeared why a new church must be erected. The first and sufficient reason was the fact that the church on Jasper Avenue was no longer adequate; the second reason was the fact that property on this avenue, as centrally



FIRST-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, BUILT IN 1912

The Birth of a Province

located as First Presbyterian Church, was much too valuable for institutional premises. Taxes would be enormous. It was decided to sell and build on 105th Street. There can be no doubt that Dr. McQueen's action in urging the sale of the old property saved the congregation many thousands of dollars. On March 3, 1912, the first service was held in the present church. It was formally dedicated on June 3rd of that year, with Rev. Dr. G. M. Milligan, of Old St. Andrew's, Toronto, and Rev. Dr. A. B. Baird, the first minister of the church, as preachers.

That year, in the first week of June, the General Assembly met in First Presbyterian Church, Edmonton, with Dr. McQueen as Moderator. Twenty-five years of hard work in a congregation which, for ten years of that period, was a struggling outpost mission, had now been rewarded with a beautiful edifice sufficiently commodious to accommodate the Church Assembly, and had placed upon his broad and still vigorous shoulders the greatest honour and the greatest responsibility the Presbyterian Church can give its sons.

As the gathering rose to the strains of the opening hymn of the Assembly, Dr.

McQueen of Edmonton

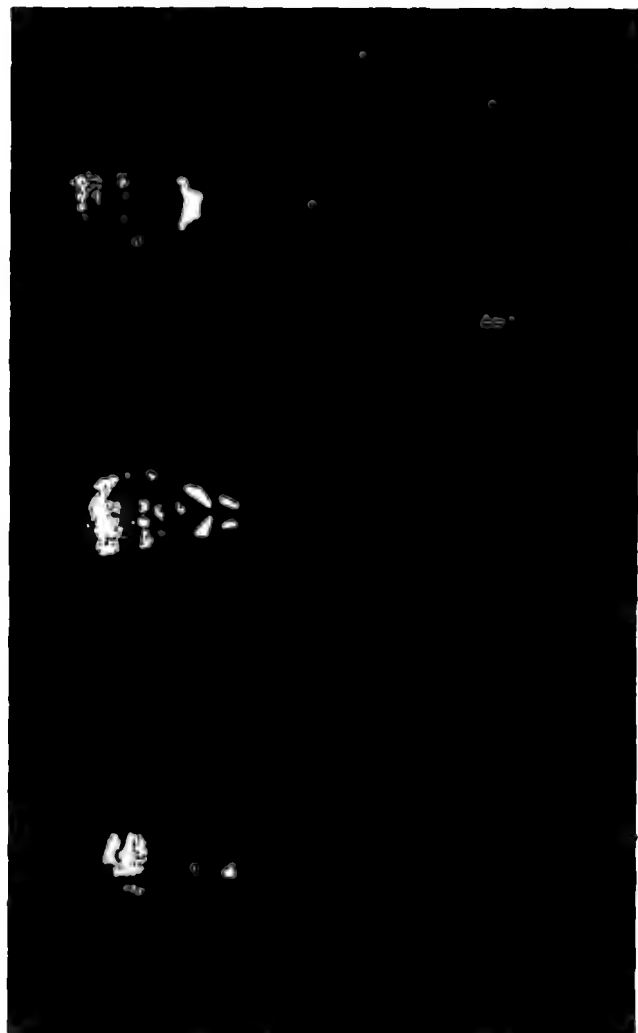
McQueen stood with bowed head, and in his mind's eye perhaps he saw again the landmarks on the long uphill trail, from the old stone house at Kirkwall to the Moderatorship of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, and once again for a moment he heard his father's parting blessing and saw his white hair waving in the breeze. It had been a stormy, broken, uphill road, but a joyous one throughout.

Does the road lead uphill all the way?

Yes, to the very end.

Does the day's journey take the whole long day?
From morn till night, my friend.

—*Christina Rossetti.*



ROBERT, JAMES AND DAVID G. McQUEEN AT THE 1912 ASSEMBLY IN EDMONTON



CHAPTER XIII

TALES AND TRAILS

WHEN Dr. McQueen was asked, in 1930, some months before his death, what he considered the outstanding events in his forty-three years' experience in Edmonton, he mentioned first, the coming of the railway to Strathcona in 1891, and the tremendous developments which followed immediately, in the way of building and increase in real estate values. Next came the famous land office "rebellion," when Thomas Anderson, land and timber merchant, attempted to move his office to the south side, later known as Strathcona. He had received orders from the Government in Ottawa that the land office was to be moved across the river, the assumption being that the city's growth would take place in conjunction with the terminal of the railway. When Mr. Anderson arrived with a drayman to load up the records, for transportation, Mayor McCauley called out the old home guard, which was organized during the Riel Rebellion of 1885. The wheels were taken off the wagon, and Mr. Anderson was told

McQueen of Edmonton

to report back to the south side of the river empty-handed. Another drayman was sent over later on, but he was met at the ferry by an armed and determined group of men, who told him to go home or he would regret it. Meanwhile Government officials sent a hurry-up call to Fort Saskatchewan for the police. Major Griesbach, father of Major-General Griesbach, arrived with a small force outside the town near Rat Creek, but Major Osborne, Edmonton's postmaster and commander of the home-guard, met the Mounted Police detachment and defied them to enter the city. The fight was watched with great interest by other towns and cities in Alberta, and offers of assistance came from Calgary, Macleod and other places. In the end, the "rebellion" was a success. No blood was spilled; the land office was not moved, and the only casualty was Major Osborne, who was dismissed from office on the grounds that he, a Federal officer, had taken up arms against the Government.

Many stories are told of Dr. McQueen's experiences as "a marrying man." In an interview given to the *Edmonton Journal*, in 1924, he confessed that he had married over 5,000 during his ministry—an aver-

Tales and Trails

age of nearly 70 couples a year, over a period of thirty-seven years. Sometimes they paid a cash fee for the ceremony; very often recognition of the boon was realized in a load of oats for "Old John" or a load of potatoes for the cellar. Couples came at all hours of the day or night, sometimes with, and often without, a ring to seal the compact.

Dr. McQueen used to tell with a smile of a young minister of his acquaintance who was annoyed by the ease with which many of his people slipped from under the responsibility of paying a small fee to the needy minister. One day a wealthy Scottish farmer came to him to arrange for his wedding to a young Scottish immigrant girl. He was a big farmer, and was said to have large funds on deposit at the bank. The young minister, on the strength of a probable fee of ten dollars or more, promised his bride of a few weeks a new dress. The great day arrived. The manse was made gay with flowers, and the ceremony performed with due solemnity and occasion. After the register was signed, the bridegroom with a great effort produced a one-dollar bill and handed it to the crestfallen minister. Now it happened

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that an hour before the ceremony, the minister, returning from the post office, had seen the Scotsman's hired man loading up at the wholesale liquor store with barrels of beer and cases of liquor for the dance to follow the wedding. At least one hundred dollars' worth of drink was on that wagon, and when he looked at the one-dollar bill in his hand his gorge rose within him. Then a bright thought came to him. Before he had left the East he had purchased at a price of two dollars a dozen a number of gaily-decorated marriage certificates, with doves and roses in violent colours all over them. "Thank you," he said to the Scotsman. "Now, would you like a marriage certificate?" "Ah sair-tinly would," replied the canny Scot. So the minister went up to his study, got out one of the gay certificates, filled in all the required information and, holding it firmly in his hands, said: "This will cost you twenty-five dollars." With a groan of agony the Scot produced the twenty-five dollars, and the minister's wife got her new gown.

"I can't say," added Dr. McQueen, "that I approved of the young man's action, but I certainly admired his business

Tales and Trails

acumen. He is now a successful minister of The United Church," he added with a chuckle.

Dr. McQueen neither smoked nor drank, but his attitude toward these vices was one of toleration and understanding. For drunkenness or excess of any kind he had the sternest rebuke, but for the men whose virtues he knew well, moderation and temperance in all things he demanded, and his demands were not refused by those who knew and loved him best. His abstinence from liquor and tobacco never made him a spoil-sport, and he was always a welcome guest at Burns banquets or other gatherings where on occasion wine flowed freely.

James Macgregor, for many years superintendent of the northern district for the C.P.R., and erstwhile President of the Burns Club, loved to take his friend, Dr. McQueen, in his private car with him on inspection tours. Once, when he had made up a small party of friends—of whom McQueen was one—to make a tour of the Peace River country, he indulged his love of a practical joke at the good Doctor's expense. Unknown to McQueen, he seized an opportunity to hide a bottle of whiskey

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in his club-bag. Meanwhile he had arranged with the police to raid the car in search of liquor just before it pulled out of the station. All the guests were seated, waiting for the train to start, when a police inspector entered and ordered them to open their bags. Mr. Macgregor made an indignant refusal and ordered the inspector off his private car. But the official produced a paper which purported to be a warrant of search, and proceeded to examine the luggage. All went well till he came to Dr. McQueen's bag, when, to the surprise of all except "Wee Macgregor," he emerged with a quart bottle of "Johnnie Walker." Needless to say, Dr. McQueen saw the joke at once and enjoyed it as much as any one.

He had a ready tongue and a quick turn of wit, and was usually at his best when introducing a speaker or responding to a toast at a banquet. Many people will recall the ease and grace with which he could return the light banter of his associates in the Rotary Club, or at a dinner gathering. I once remember when he was proposing a vote of thanks to a visiting guest, who spoke on recent observations in Ireland. It was at the time of the post-war



DOCTOR MCQUEEN BLESSING THE COLOURS OF THE 63RD BATTALION. CAPTAIN JAMES MCQUEEN
THIRD FROM THE LEFT

Tales and Trails

troubles in that country, and the speaker kept saying: "I was struck with one thing." In his remarks of appreciation, Dr. McQueen dryly commented on the fact that any man was lucky to spend a year in Ireland and be struck with only one thing.

On another occasion a presentation was being made to Dr. McQueen by the Rotary Club. One of the speakers told of his admiration for the clergyman, but said he had always wished the Doctor would not give such long prayers, nor preach so long. The speaker had heard a minister in the States explain the shortness of his morning address by saying that his dog had eaten part of his manuscript—and the Edmonton gentleman added that he wished he could have given one of the dog's pups to Dr. McQueen. When the Doctor rose to reply, he said he had always considered Mr. Blank a kind and humane man, but he would have to revise his opinion after hearing his suggestion that he would like to give a poor dumb animal something to eat which he could not digest himself.

No one loved a good story more than Dr. McQueen, and as a raconteur he was without a peer. It was worth while saving

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up a good story to tell him just to hear his chuckle of approval, and then watch the awakening gleam in his eye as he recalled something of a similar nature. One or two of his stories come back across the years. On one occasion, at a country fair in Ontario, he had stood beside some people who were watching a mechanical man. Suddenly an old lady grabbed her companion by the arm and said: "It's too much like the work of Almighty God; let's get out of here."

One of the last stories I heard him tell was while playing golf one day at Mayfair Golf Club. He was telling of some friends of his in Vancouver who had a Chinese boy as a servant. The mistress of the house had been anxious to teach the boy English, and for this purpose had used the Presbyterian hymn-book. Among other things, she had him learn by heart all of the hymn which carries the refrain: "O Lamb of God, I come, I come." After a time the boy decided to leave for greener pastures, and did so without warning, leaving a note with no other comment than: "O Lamb of God, I go."

These are the things that make a man's

Tales and Trails

memory dear to those who loved him, and when Edmonton Scotsmen foregather and Dr. McQueen's name is mentioned, some quiet voice remarks: "He was a great man; we shall not see his like again. His sermons may not be remembered, but his honour, his straightness, and his sense of humour are not forgotten."

The outbreak of the Great War, in 1914, put an end to the western boom, and during the next four years the whole of Canada was united as it had never been before in a common purpose. Dr. McQueen was long past the age of service at the front, but to the allied cause and its justice he gave his last ounce of physical and moral energy as chaplain to the 101st Battalion, and in various other activities. In 1915 his two sons, James and Alex, left Edmonton for France, and in June Alex gave his life for his country at the terrific battle of Sanctuary Wood, June 4, 1916. James returned safely, with the rank of Captain and having won the Military Cross.

Dr. McQueen had grown up with his children. His extraordinary youthfulness of spirit, and his unfailing sense of fun, had served to create a genuine bond of loyalty

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and understanding between himself and his family. As he watched them leave school, one after another, on their way to the university, the years ripened upon him in serenity and contentment.

The war brought the first separation in an unusually happy family circle, and Alex's death the first break. The Assembly met in Winnipeg that year, and the battle of Sanctuary Wood took place over the week-end of June 2nd and 3rd. When the news came, Mrs. McQueen decided not to let her husband know till he arrived home; but some one told him on the train, and the people who met him at the station say that he walked toward them like a man who has received a mortal wound. The death of his second son was a blow from which Dr. McQueen never fully recovered.

Already Alex had distinguished himself as a soldier. When he was under fire for the first time in October, 1915, his fearlessness and self-possession in rescuing two of his comrades within forty yards of the enemy lines had been mentioned in several letters from non-commissioned officers and men of the battalion. The manner of his death is not exactly known. He had been

Tales and Trails

wounded in the arm and shoulder, and had started to walk to a dressing-station. Later he was found shot through the chest. Whatever the end may have been, there can be no doubt he met it like the happy warrior he had always been. In his last gallant moments he would have the satisfaction of knowing that he had been true to a tradition that was as much a part of himself as the breath he breathed. "So he passed over, and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side."

At a special meeting of the Session of First Presbyterian Church, held on Sunday, June 18, 1916, the following resolution was passed, and the Clerk was instructed to inscribe the same on the permanent records of the Session and to forward a copy to the Rev. Dr. and Mrs. McQueen:

RESOLVED that this Session, in special meeting, desires to extend its heartfelt sympathy to its Moderator, the Reverend D. G. McQueen, D.D., LL.D., and to Mrs. McQueen, in the loss of their gallant son, Lance-Corporal Alex McQueen, who died from wounds received in action in Flanders on the 4th day of June, 1916. At the same time this Session desires to inscribe on its permanent records its proud appreciation of his heroic conduct. During a long and terrible campaign he did his duty

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unflinchingly. In making the supreme sacrifice on the battlefield, he has left a name in which we all feel a personal pride and which will long be treasured not only by this Church and by an unusually wide circle of friends, but by the nation at large.

Signed on behalf of the Session.

D. S. MACKENZIE,

Clerk.

CHAPTER XIV

THE CHURCH UNION MOVEMENT

TWENTY-FIVE years of agitation and negotiation preceded the final consummation of Church Union. Three separate denominational affiliations had been effected shortly after Confederation. The Presbyterian churches in Canada had united in 1875; the Methodist churches in 1874 and 1883-1884, and the Congregational Union had taken shape in 1906.

The tremendous influx of people to the western plains after the building of the C.P.R., and particularly during the opening years of this century, placed an unprecedented burden upon Home Mission Boards. Communities were scattered, the people struggling desperately to establish themselves; distances and trails were difficult to overcome. It was obvious that the East must support western missions for many years before self-supporting congregations to any great number could be expected to appear. The effort made by each denomination to keep step with the receding frontier was costly and wasteful. Not only did it make enormous demands upon the

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generosity and good will of eastern congregations and business men, but it was a handicap to the men on the mission field. The conviction was slowly but surely taking shape that the rivalry of the churches in the small western communities was unseemly if not unchristian.

The demand at first was for co-operation in eliminating overlapping. Superintendents of Missions were encouraged to consult with each other, with a view to making such readjustments as might be possible and convenient in opening new fields or reorganizing those already occupied. Definite undertakings of co-operation were agreed upon, whereby denominations consented to remain out of specified areas and undertook to become solely responsible for other needy districts. By this method alternate towns along a railway were, in many instances, assigned to Methodist and Presbyterian missionaries in turn. Such a policy, of course, was designed largely in the interest of economy. The system was autocratic in the sense that it was carried through by the Church authorities and was not subject to the consent or adjustments of local congregations. Nevertheless the policy of co-

The Church Union Movement

operation was making headway, and in many sections of the country had worked out with such satisfaction that a number of independent united churches grew out of the preliminary arrangements. In 1902, however, the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches definitely challenged each other to consider an organic union, and the Western Provinces, particularly in rural districts, gave the suggested policy a great deal of thought and considerable enthusiasm. Any such projected policy of wholesale inclusion, however, requires years of diplomatic negotiations and careful and widespread education. The growth and acceptance of an idea contemplating so drastic and basic a change, affecting intimately so many thousands of homes, can neither be forced in its development nor autocratically imposed upon a people, however widely it may be accepted theoretically.

It is not surprising that the negotiations seemed unnecessarily long drawn out to those who gave the idea of union their whole-hearted and enthusiastic support. The increasing number of independent unions, and the pressure of many of the church's leaders, who were enthusiasts in the cause of union, had the effect of forcing

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the officials of the three Churches into closer co-operation.

At the meeting of the General Assembly in Edmonton, in 1912, a resolution was adopted postponing union with a view to securing a wider acceptance of the principle. Dr. McQueen felt that the objectives of the proposed union could be attained in a peaceful and orderly way, without any such violation of sentiment and tradition as was bound to be involved in amalgamation.

In fact, the experience of the co-operative idea in Alberta had been such as to give strong support to this conviction. Here the principle of co-operation had been in successful operation since 1910. The Province had been divided into nine local districts under a provincial committee which met annually. Overlapping had been eliminated to such an extent that it appeared doubtful if organic union would or could go any further in the saving of men and money. In other words, men like Dr. McQueen and Rev. F. D. Roxburgh, who led the opposition forces in Alberta, were convinced that co-operation could be managed in such a way as com-

The Church Union Movement

pletely to overtake all the objectives of union.

Principal D. J. Fraser, of Montreal Theological College, expressed the feeling of Dr. McQueen, and many others, so far as the philosophy of union was concerned, when he said:

Many Presbyterians, who at heart cherish the sense of unity, nevertheless feel that in view of present conditions in Canada, the best contribution they can make to whatever permanent and effective union the future has in store for them, is to devote themselves, amid the congenial environment of their own church, to the actual work that church has to do. This may be the result of native timidity or conservative temperament, but it is not necessarily sectarianism.

It is not the function of this small book to retrace the steps or recount the arguments pro and con in the long struggle which led to the consummation of union in June, 1925. But no life of Dr. McQueen would be complete without the story of what took place on that occasion immediately following the action of the Assembly.

At the meeting in Toronto that year, on June 9th, a motion was passed to the effect that "When this Assembly adjourns, this

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afternoon; it do adjourn to meet . . . the 24th day of June, 1925, unless in the meantime its rights, privileges, authorities and powers shall have ceased, under the terms of . . . the United Church of Canada Act" . . . It being well understood that the adjourned meeting would not take place.

A protest against such adjournment, and a claim of right, signed by seventy-nine members of the Assembly, to continue in session as the same Assembly of the same Church, was handed to the Moderator and permission asked to read a copy of it to the Assembly. This was refused, and when the Moderator pronounced the benediction and declared the Assembly closed, there followed one of the most dramatic incidents in the history of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. The seventy-nine protestants immediately chose Dr. McQueen as their leader, and with bowed heads, amid the tumult of the adjourned meeting, reconstituted the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church and adjourned, to meet at eleven-forty-five that same night in Knox Church, King Street West. On the evening of that day, June 9th, long before the appointed hour, throngs gathered in Knox Church for the second session of the Assembly

The Church Union Movement

reconstituted that afternoon. Dr. McQueen was again in the chair, and at the midnight hour the session was constituted and continued its deliberations on into the early hours of June 10th.

The third of the three notable successive sessions of that historic Assembly of 1925 was held in St. Andrew's Church on June 11th. It was an appropriate setting, for in that same place, in 1913, had been formed the first organization to "maintain and defend" the Presbyterian Church "against betrayal by the majority in her own Assembly." Here that defence had been reorganized in 1916 as "The Presbyterian Church Association," and here the General Assembly, "once more Presbyterian and free, now met to face the duties of the present and to plan for the future."

In the election of a Moderator only one name was mentioned, and that doughty warrior, Ephraim Scott, became Moderator of "The Presbyterian Church in Canada," the minority claiming unbroken succession in the Church of their fathers.

There can be no doubt that Dr. McQueen came home from the Assembly that year with a heavy heart. He was sincerely convinced that the decision made by the

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majority was inherently a betrayal of the vows, traditions, and the basis of belief of the Presbyterian faith. He was equally convinced that the Presbyterian Church under its reorganization had a greater responsibility and a greater future than ever. But the fight was over, and for individual ministers the most difficult and delicate of tasks remained. It was necessary for most congregations to vote on the question of union. First Presbyterian Church had already decided the course it would follow when the vote was taken before the meeting in Toronto. It is doubtful whether many people in the packed church were thinking of the wider question of the organization of the churches. Most of them were thinking of Dr. McQueen, their beloved pastor and friend. Those who had decided on principle to go into the union felt as deeply as those who intended to remain, the strong personal element in the decision.

Ballot boxes were placed in front of the choir-loft at the end of the centre aisles, and as the congregation moved forward to vote, Dr. McQueen silenced the turmoil by a dignified request: "We are in the



DR. McQUEEN, MODERATOR OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 1912-1913



The Church Union Movement

house of God. Let us conduct ourselves with dignity." The vote was taken at twelve o'clock. Shortly afterward the result was announced—"A large majority against union." Dr. McQueen raised his hand and said: "Let us pray." So far as his own congregation was concerned, the long struggle had ended.

CHAPTER XV

CLOSING YEARS

THE next five years of Dr. McQueen's life were full of activity, although the heavy responsibility of a still-growing congregation had been greatly relieved by the appointment of Rev. Thomas Tait, M.A., B.D., as Associate Minister of First Presbyterian Church. He, however, still carried on his work of visitation, and gave a courageous and convincing leadership to the councils of the Presbyterian Church. The struggle over Church Union and its inevitable bitterness had left its mark upon him. It had broken in upon the long peace of his forty years' ministry and taken away many friends whom he had loved. He had fought for his convictions vigorously and well, but he had fought fairly, and while there may have been some embarrassment immediately after the division on Church Union, the friends who had left him soon found again the warm handshake and the ready smile with which they had been so long familiar.

But the years were closing in, and although the beloved pastor and friend of

Closing Years

so many Edmontonians could still drive a long ball down the fairway and place a stone in the centre of the house at curling, his step was slowing up and his frame becoming a little more stooped.

Dr. McQueen's health had been excellent all his life, but the war and its activities and anxieties had taken toll of his strength.

On June 27, 1927, First Presbyterian Church celebrated the fortieth anniversary of Dr. McQueen's arrival in the city. Special services were held to commemorate the event. The morning service was conducted by Rev. A. B. Baird, D.D., LL.D., of Winnipeg, who had come back to the scene of his early labours for the occasion. A complimentary banquet, attended by over seven hundred people, was tendered Dr. and Mrs. McQueen at the Macdonald Hotel on the Monday evening following. The illuminated address, presented by the congregation and read by McQueen's life-long friend, John A. McDougall, was a worthy tribute to the long devotion of a worthy man.

To maintain for a period of forty years a high degree of efficiency in any sphere of honourable service is itself an achievement deserving

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more than passing notice, but the unstained record of your good works and of your influence, which has radiated far and wide from the First Presbyterian Church as its vital centre, is in many respects so remarkable that we feel unable to express adequately the esteem and affection cherished for you by thousands of human hearts.

Not only the devoted members of your own Church, but also many, many other persons have been deeply impressed by your unwavering loyalty to the Christian Faith and to the Presbyterian Church, by the fine spirit of enterprise, heroism and self-sacrifice that brought you to this remote and difficult field of ministerial labour, and by your able endurance of incidental trials—among these, the sacrifice of your gallant son in the Great War—trials to which many a man might have succumbed.

Your zealous service to the Church, to education, to philanthropy, and to other movements of Christian progress are remembered with devout admiration and gratitude; and rejoicing with you in the domestic felicity which has relieved the stress and strain of these crowded years, we desire that Mrs. McQueen shall share the tribute of our admiration.

In October, 1930, after a severe operation, from which it was at first believed he would recover, Dr. McQueen finished his course, having kept faith with himself and his God throughout a long and noble life.

His funeral was more than a religious

Closing Years

ceremony of the Presbyterian Church. In his death Dr. McQueen belonged to the people of Northern Alberta. Flags in the city were at half-mast, and leaders from every walk of life and of every creed stood side by side with battered old-timers, farmers, trappers, traders; as well as sophisticated young men and women of the city, to pay tribute to the memory of a good man who had gone home.

In recognition of a long and meritorious service in the colonial forces, Dr. McQueen had been awarded the Victorian Decoration; and his association as chaplain with the 101st Battalion, the Northern Alberta Pioneers and Old-Timers' Association, as well as various other societies, suggested a military funeral. But the family decided otherwise. He was borne to his last resting-place in the beautiful Edmonton Cemetery, preceded by representatives of the 49th, C.N.R. and Edmonton Boys' bands, and as the pipers played the traditional Scottish lament, "The Flowers of the Forest," they gave expression to the grief of the throngs of fellow-citizens who lined the city streets to pay final honour to him on his last journey through his beloved city.

McQueen of Edmonton

IN MEMORIAM

His feet were set on hardy paths, and new-made
roughened trails;
His faith was of the sturdy stuff that stands and
never fails.
He had the heart of fighting men, the surety of
God
That raised a mighty, little church upon a virgin
sod.

He lived the lives of simple folk, and broke
their prairie bread;
He read their vows and named their sons, and
sat beside their dead.
His work was like a moving force across the
prairie plain,
To broken spirits, sun and warmth; to parching
spirits, rain.

To-day he silently is gone, his labours all
complete,
His memory only in the church, his friendship
in the street;
And though he breaks no more your bread, nor
sits beside your fire,
Yonder, like some white-burning flame, lifts yet
his own soul's spire.

—*Lotta C. Dempsey.*

CHAPTER XVI

CONCLUSION

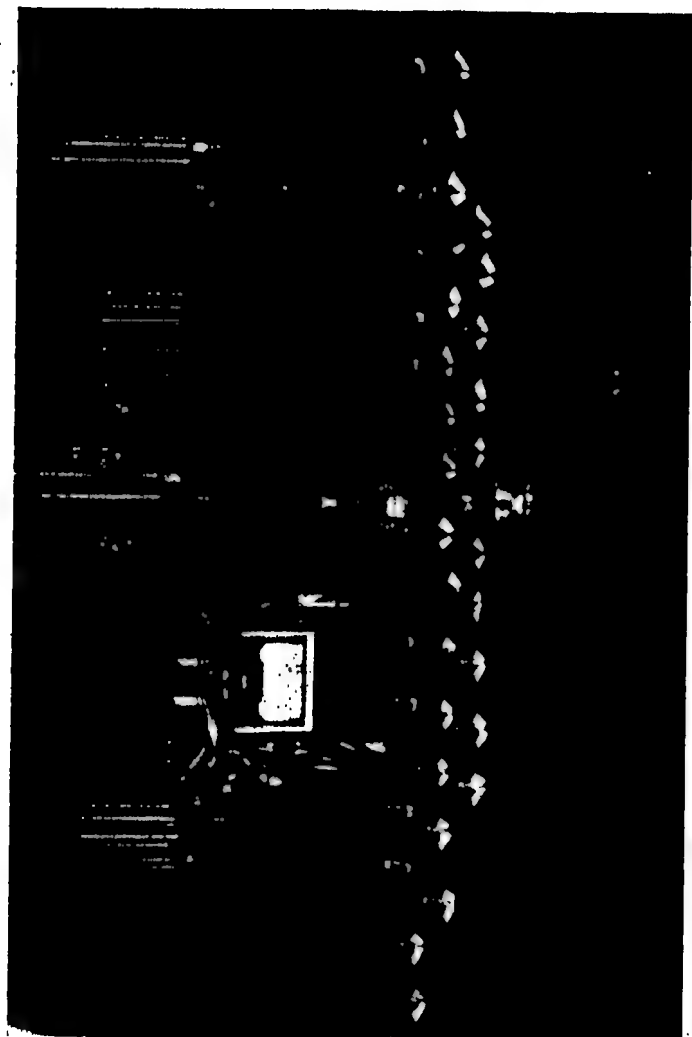
DR. McQUEEN'S strength lay in the unusual balance of his human understanding and his religious fervour. There has always been a persistent attempt to divorce the two and to treat God's love and human love as rivals. Thomas à Kempis said: "Thou oughtest to be so dead to such affections of beloved friends that (so far as thou art concerned) thou wouldst choose to be without all human sympathy." The attempt to unravel and separate the threads of human and divine affection has added many a bitter story of unnecessary and meaningless sacrifice to Christian history. To men like Dr. McQueen, worship stripped of all earthly values was barren. The ignorant but reverent savage with his charms and sacrifices was a happier and better man than the superior person who, having rid himself of all superstition, could only stand dumb before the shrine with all power of worship or wonder dead in him. Better, he said, to find God in nature or in the light of human eyes, than to "stand alone

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in a desolated world trying to flog up into vitality purely spiritual emotions."

Dr. McQueen's strength as a frontier preacher, and later as the minister of a large city congregation, consisted in his basic conviction, constantly reiterated in his sermons and in his intimate talks with his people, *that God consents to meet men where they are, and to accept such worship as they can best bring.* Dogmas, sacraments, forms of worship and organization were only important in so far as they served to reveal God's purposes for humanity. As a preacher he was at his best among the hard-cast men of the early days of his ministry. He had one thing to say to these men, and he was never greatly concerned with the refinements of rhetoric in saying it. His honesty, his earnestness, and his vast love for human beings gave to his message a reality that the roughest and often the most ignorant could understand and accept.

Like his forbears, Dr. McQueen was distrustful of all emotional display. Bursts of evangelical fervour he regarded as a kind of spiritual distemper, unhealthy, and fortunately short-lived. He believed that, while it might be an excellent thing to be



INTERIOR FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, SHOWING DR. McQUEEN IN PULPIT
AND CHOIR WITH FESTIVAL AWARDS

Conclusion

able to "run and not be weary," it was a better, and much more difficult thing to "walk and not faint." Yet, in spite of his apparent calm, actually he had in him a burning passion for human souls. It revealed itself in his contacts with people. He was father-confessor to a far greater number of Edmontonians than any one will ever know; it found expression in his prayers; in the texts of his sermons, and in the very change which came over him when he ascended the pulpit.

Then with a rush, the intolerable craving
Shivered throughout him, like a trumpet-call.
Oh to save these! to perish for their saving,
Die for their life, be offered for them all.

—F. W. H. Myer.

Therein was the secret of his success as a minister of the Gospel and as a citizen. A character deeply rooted in a love of God, which finds its highest expression in service to mankind, is perhaps the only absolutely unbeatable thing in human affairs.

Many eloquent tributes were paid Dr. McQueen at the time of his death. One by G.V.F. of the *Winnipeg Free Press* is notable for its conciseness and penetration:

"A good name is better than precious ointment," says the Preacher, "and the day of

McQueen of Edmonton

death than the day of one's birth." The sad, compact wisdom of Ecclesiastes came easily enough to mind when the word was carried across Canada last week, that Rev. Dr. McQueen of Edmonton was dead. He was seventy-five years old, that stout-hearted old man, and he had been the minister of First Presbyterian Church in Edmonton for forty-three years, coming to his charge fresh from the University of Toronto and Knox College, a disciple of the famous Dr. Robertson, who ranged over all the prairies in those days laying down the lines of a work greater even than he dreamed of.

Dr. McQueen was as much a part of Edmonton as the woods that line the gorge of the Saskatchewan River that cuts the town in two. His tall, spare figure, the austere, clean-shaven face with its deep-hewn lines, was as familiar in the streets as in the pulpit of his church. He was pointed out to strangers as a matter of social pride. He had become a landmark, and it will be long before the people of Edmonton fully realize that he is dead.

When a man becomes a landmark as did Dr. McQueen, there is a reason for it; and with him it was force of character. Combined with a deep vein of tolerant humour there ran in him a strictness of honesty and integrity that was as rare as it was precious. He was immovable in his loyalties. When the Union fight was at its fiercest, he carried himself and his congregation into the continuing Presbyterian Church. In 1917, when a coalition government was formed to carry on the war,

Conclusion

this staunch old Liberal refused to forsake his ancient allegiance. The rightness or wrongness of his course is not called in question here. It was the way he did it that counted in both cases. There was a widespread bitterness in both these struggles, but it did not touch Dr. McQueen. There was nobility in the way he plowed those lonely furrows. His fighting was always clean fighting. He did not stoop.

He was in a very real sense a minister of the old school. Though a man of parts—in college an honours man in mathematics—his congregation did not go to his church for the sake of any brilliant profundity of religious thought. Nor did they go attracted by what passes these days for popular preaching. They went, instead, to hear Dr. McQueen. He never preached a "popular" sermon in his life. He did not go in for topical subjects in an attempt to draw and hold big crowds. But Sunday after Sunday he preached the simple evangelical doctrine that in his youth had carried him away from a promising business life and brought him by stage to Edmonton.

The life of the pioneer was deep in him. He came to Edmonton when it was a tiny village, and the qualities which endeared him to his fellow pioneers were the qualities which brought their children and children's children to his church, when he had become an "old-timer," that proud and pregnant phrase which year by year means less and less as the real old-timers pass away. Those qualities were the typical characteristics of the best pioneers: character, deep-seated friendliness, tolerance,

McQueen of Edmonton

combined with utmost integrity, and a rich humour which alone can keep a man's nature sweet upon the frontier.

Everybody trusted him; everybody came to him for help; and everybody respected him. It would be no compliment to say that everybody loved him, for there were crooks in Edmonton as there are everywhere else in the world, and Dr. McQueen dealt with them as eternally and as firmly as his Scots Presbyterian forbears had dealt with evil-doers in the days when a minister ruled his parish with the rod as well as with love. But he was a just man, and justice brings respect in its train.

So it was with Dr. McQueen in Edmonton, and some part of that firm character which was his is built into the stones and mortar of that city in such a way that his influence will last so long as grass grows and water runs. Long after his soft-voiced speech has been forgotten, long after there is no one left who can remember the tall, impressive figure in Geneva gown and bands, behind the reading-lamp of his high-placed pulpit, his forty years of labour will still be counting in the daily life of the Alberta capital. That is the kind of immortality that counts.

Dr. McQueen's lasting memorial is in the hearts of the men and women who knew him, and for them the bronze tablet in First Presbyterian Church gives adequate expression to all that needs to be said.

IN MEMORIAM

ERECTED IN HONOURED MEMORY

OF

REV. DAVID GEORGE McQUEEN

B.A., D.D., LL.D.

**WHO WAS MINISTER OF
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
FOR 43 YEARS AND WHO ENTERED
INTO HIS ETERNAL REST
OCTOBER 22ND, 1930.**

**AN EMINENT CITIZEN AND CHURCH LEADER
AND A MAN GREATLY BELOVED BY ALL.**



**WE HUMBLY THANK GOD FOR THE EXAMPLE
OF HIS LIFE.**